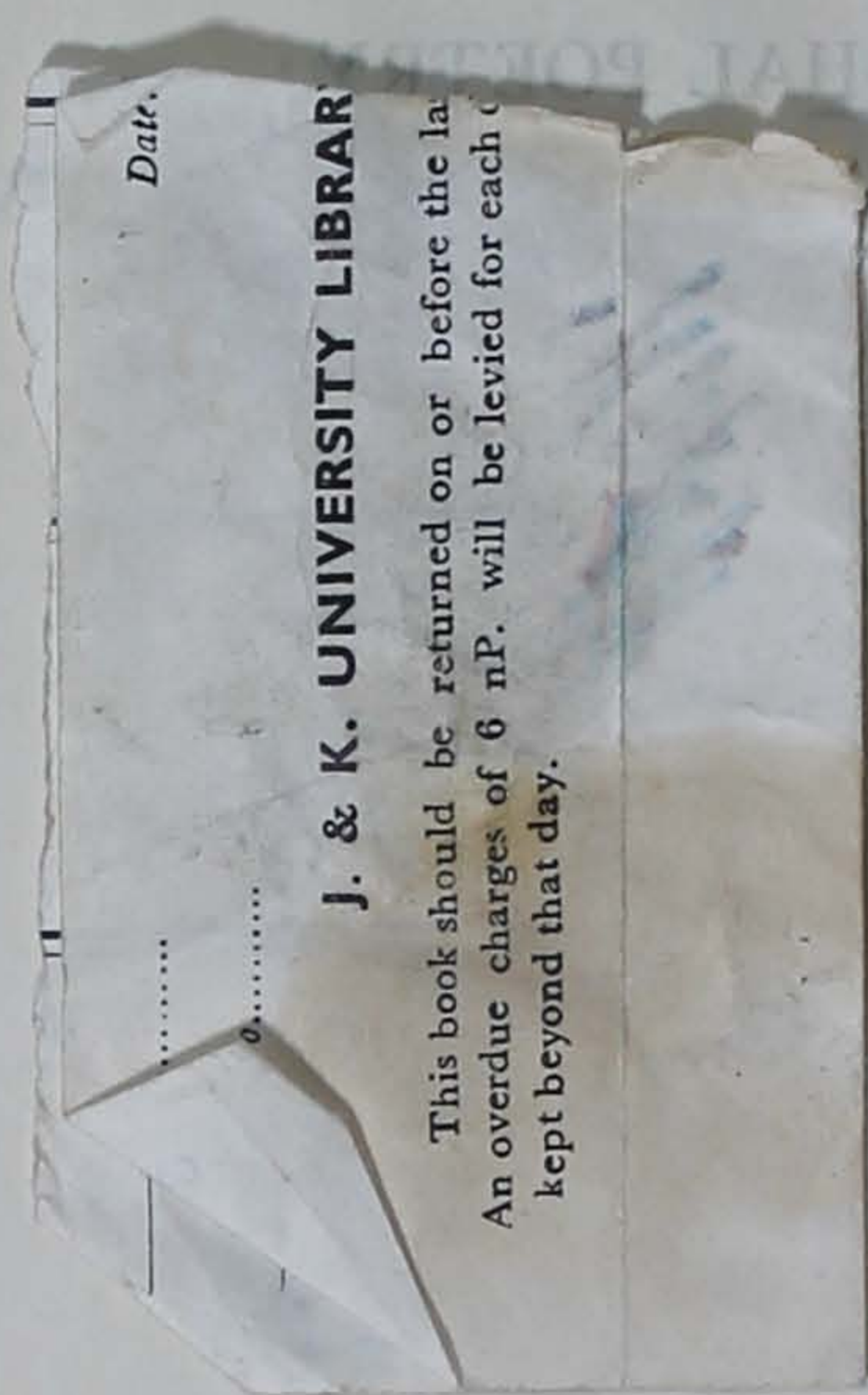


DEDICATED TO
1953 Mohammed Nazir Husayn of Madras
equally eminent as a thinker, patriot and philanthropist
محمّد نذیر حسین صاحب مدظلہ العالی
مدرسہ اسلامیہ دارالعلوم دیوبند
ADD TO
**MUGHAL POETRY:
ITS CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL VALUE**

By

HĀDĪ HASAN

P. 09 (En)
H 47 M.



DEDICATED

TO

Hājī Muḥammad Nazīr Ḥusayn of Madras

equally eminent as a thinker, patriot and philanthropist

بخشد دل تو فیض و نجوید سبب چو مهر جانها همه فدای دل مهربان تو

AND TO

Begum Nazīr Ḥusayn

'fair as a star when only one is shining in the sky'

یا رب چه گوهری تو که افروخت در ازل جانهای قدسیان همه از نور جان تو

JULY 1931

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
1. Preface	1
2. General Characteristics of Mughal Poetry	3-13
3. 'UTHMĀN MUḤAMMAD ISMĀ'IL-'UTHMĀN 'ABDU'L-HAQ	14
4. Court-Poets of the Great	31-46
5. Odes for the	47-62
6. Poetry of Mughal Royalty	63-80

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
1. Preface	I
2. General Characteristics of Mughal Poetry	3—13
3. Merits of Mughal Poetry	15—29
4. Court-Poets of the Great Mughals	31—46
5. Odes for which the Poets were weighed in Silver	47—62
6. Poetry of Mughal Royalty	63—80

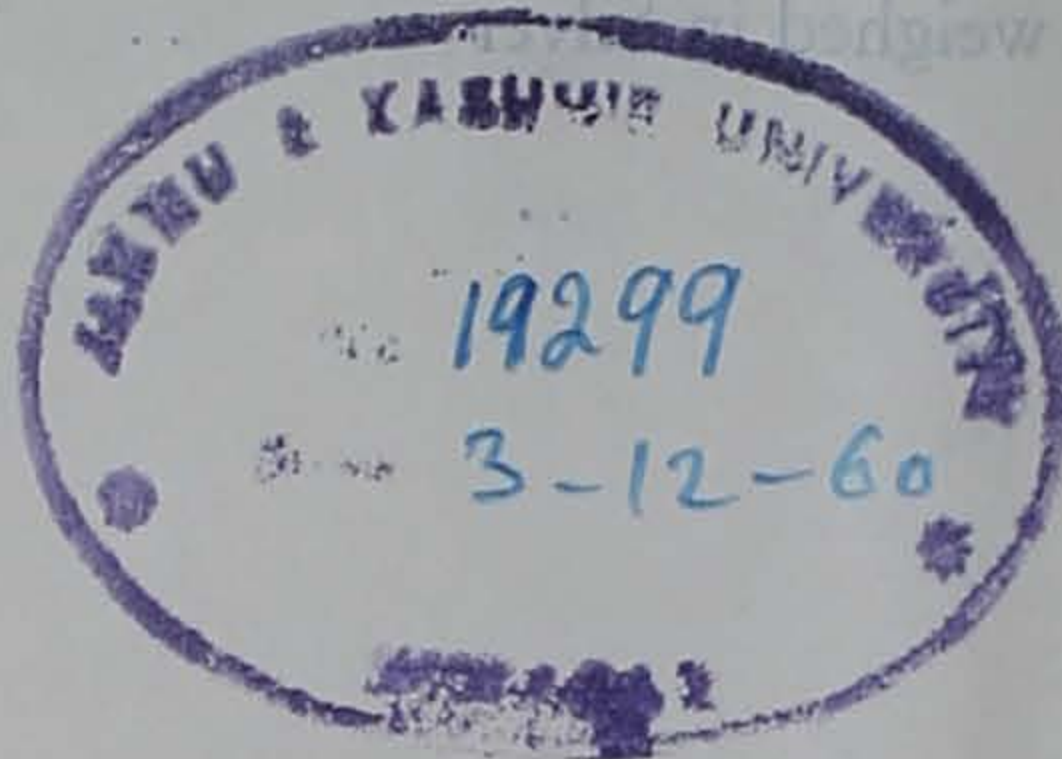
TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

1	Preface
3-13	General Characteristics of Mughal Poetry
15-20	Merits of Mughal Poetry
31-46	Court-Poets of the Great Mughals
47-61	Odes for which the Poets were weighed
63-80	Poetry of Mughal Royalty

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P R E F A C E

MUGHAL poetry is the Persian poetry of Mughal India and it is here presented in such fashion that those who do not know Persian may not find the Persian originals obstacles in their way whereas those who know Persian may be able to read the original and the translation simultaneously, for no translation, howsoever exquisite, can take the place of the original : the translation is the picture, but the original is the bride.

The book has been written with the barest economy of words : “ ye shall not be heard for your much speaking.” Also there is much in it which is new and novel. And if I have done nothing in life, I have at least found the unique *dīwān* of Falakī in Madras, of the Emperor Humāyūn in Patna and of Kāhī in Lucknow. For the loan of the last two *dīwāns* my gratitude to my talented friends Prof. ‘Askarī of Patna and Prof. Mas‘ūd Ḥasan Ridwī of Lucknow is in my heart, mind, tongue. Falakī’s *dīwān* has already been printed ; Humāyūn’s is in press ; and Kāhī’s is nearing completion. It is curious how Life moves in a circle. The impetus for all the writing I did in the past came from Dr. Dhākir Ḥusayn, Vice-Chancellor of ‘Alīgarh Muslim University ; and the stimulus for all the writing I am now doing also comes from him. I know that he reads with pleasure what I write, though what I write is hardly worth reading, especially by an educationist of his eminence.

To my many friends in Madras—Ḥājī Naẓīr Ḥusayn, Prof. A. W. Bukhārī, Messrs. Ḥājī Jamālu’d-Dīn, ‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz Khān, M. A. A. Sathār and that man of vision, the founder of a college in Kurnool and the Principal of Presidency College, Dr. ‘Abdu’l-Ḥaq—who have always received me with open arms, what shall I say ? “Perishable is every edifice that you see save the edifice of love which is imperishable.” Fortunately, Dr. ‘Abdu’l-Ḥaq has now been appointed Pro-Vice-Chancellor of ‘Alīgarh Muslim University—a just but tardy recognition of his scholarship and dynamic energy.

Finally I thank the printers for printing well what was not easy to print at all. The Director, Janāb Sayyid Aṣghar Ḥusayn and the Asst. Director, Shīrī R. Rajagopal have made the Hyderabad Government Central Press one of the best presses in India of to-day and I hope that they and Messrs. Ram Chander and Ja‘far will extend to me the same courtesy and co-operation when the *Dīwān-i-Kāhī* goes to press.

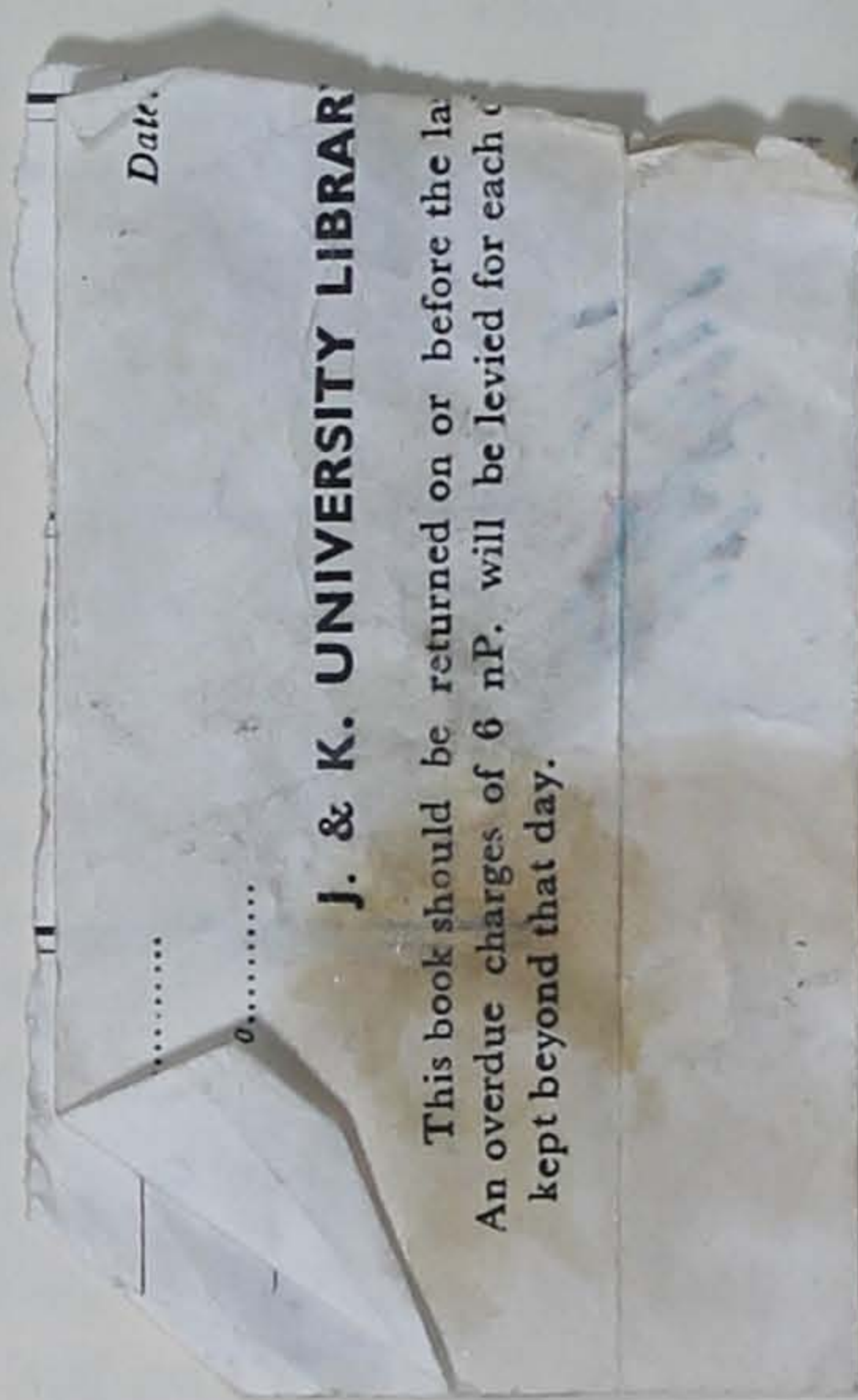
HĀDĪ ḤASAN,
‘Alīgarh,
30 April 1952.

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Talak in Madras, of the Emperor Humayun in Patna and of Kahi in Lucknow.
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GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF MUGHAL POETRY



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GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF MUGHAL POETRY

THE æsthetic value of Mughal architecture, painting, jewellery, even gardens and music has not been questioned ; but on Mughal poetry, world-opinion is sharply divided. And since the object of these lectures, delivered under the auspices of a trust created for the dissemination of Islamic culture by a noble lady who herself was cultural Islam in her own lifetime, is to show that Mughal poetry is a thing of beauty, more inflammable than Tān Sen's Dīpak Rāga,¹ I shall first of all argue the case on behalf of the dissentients, that is try to explain why, in contrast to the Indians and the Turks, Persians and Europeans are not enamoured of Mughal poetry. There are many aspects of Mughal poetry on which systematic work has not been done, one of them being the Anglo-Persian dislike and the Indo-Turkish fondness for Mughal poetry.

"After Jāmī," says Gibb in his *History of Ottoman Poetry*,² "Urfī and Fayḍī were the chief Persian influences on Turkish poetry until they were superseded by Ṣā'ib : the novelty in this style lay, apart from the introduction of a number of fresh terms into the conventional vocabulary of poetry, in the deposition of rhetoric from the chief seat and the enthronement of loftiness of tone and stateliness of language in its stead." "Ḍiyā Pāshā in that portion of his metrical Introduction to the *Kharābāt* which discusses the Persian poets, after praising Jāmī, proceeds to speak of 'Urfī and Fayḍī as follows :

Fayḍī and 'Urfī run neck and neck ; they are the leaders of the later time.

In Fayḍī is eloquence and freshness ; in 'Urfī, sweetness and fluency.

In Fayḍī are fiery exhortations, while 'Urfī is strong in elegies ;

But if pre-eminence be sought, excellence still remains with Fayḍī :

Fayḍī is clear throughout ; no dots need be added to his commentary."³

The last reference is to Fayḍī's *Sawāṭī'u'l-Ilhām*, a commentary on the *Holy Qur'ān* consisting of undotted letters throughout : for example, all the dots in the two proper names يوسف and فرعون have been eliminated by rendering Joseph as 'the son of the blind' ولد الأعمى and Pharaoh as 'the enemy of Moses' عدو موسى. "Such a

1. It is reported that when Tān Sen sang the Dīpak Rāga in the presence of Akbar, the palace caught fire ; and since then notwithstanding the protection afforded by insurance companies and the fire-brigade, this inflammable and combustible Rāga has remained unsung.

2. Vol. I, pp. 5, 127, 129.

3. Prof. E. G. Browne's *Literary History of Persia*, Vol. IV, pp. 242-243.

commentary is an innovation," said the critics—to which Fayḍī replied: "The Islamic formula for the protestation of faith: 'there is no God but God and Muḥammad is the Apostle of God' لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله also consists of undotted letters throughout."

Regarding this commentary, Riḍā Qulī Khān writes in the *Majma' u'l-Fuṣahā* 1295 A.H., "Fayḍī has laboured unnecessarily" [کلفتی بی حاصل کشیده].¹ And the same Persian anthologist says of 'Urfī, d. 999/1590: "I have frequently glanced at the *dīwān* of 'Urfī: the style of his poetry is disliked by the people of Irān at the present time" [دیوان عرفی مکرر بنظر رسیده - سیاق اشعارش پسندیده اهالی این عهد نیست];² and of the poet Ṣā'ib, whose date of death by a small oversight has been given by Prof. Browne on the same page, 265 of the 4th volume of his *Literary History of Persia*, as 1080 and 1088 A.H., Riḍā Qulī Khān says: "Though Ṣā'ib's *dīwān* consists of 100,000 verses, he has a strange poetical style which no one appreciates today" [با آنکه صد هزار].³ Similarly, the anthologist Luṭf 'Alī Khān says in his *Ātashkadah*, of Kalīm, Shāh Jahān's poet-laureate d. 1061 A.H.: Kalīm "has every kind of verse; but the verse which is good he does not have": از هر قسم شعر دارد لیکن شعری که قابل باشد ندارد.

The significant fact about this denunciation of Mughal poetry is that it is a condemnation by the Persians of the Persians themselves, for with the exception of Fayḍī nearly all the notable poets of the Mughal period were Persians, born in Persia who had come to India either reluctantly:

1. "If safe and sound I cross the Sind
Blacken my face ere I wish for Hind." (Khawājah Kalān)
2. Kāhī, thou art the nightingale of the rose-garden of Kābul: thou art neither a kite nor a raven to go to Hindustān. (Qāsim-i-Kāhī, d. 988 A.H.)
کاهی تو بلبل چمن آرای کابل
زاغ و زغن نه که بهندوستان شوی
3. Where two men can be purchased for a rupee, man is known and the value of man is known. (Haydari, d. 1002 A.H.)
جائی که یک ریبه دو آدم بخزند
آدم معلوم و قدر آدم معلوم

or cheerfully:

1. The means of acquiring perfection do not exist in Irān: the henna dye acquires no colour till it comes to India. (Salīm of Tīhrān, d. 1057/1647)
نیست در ایران زمین سامان تحصیل کمال
تا نیامد سوی هندستان حنا رنگین نشد
2. India may be called a second Paradise for whosoever quits this garden, suffers from remorse. (Kalīm, d. 1061/1651)
توان بهشت دوم گفتش باین معنی
که هر که رفت ازین بوستان پشیمان شد
3. Because of my love for India, my eye is located at the back of my head in such wise that when I set out for Irān, I do not see what is ahead of me. (Kalīm)
ز شوق هند زان سان چشم حسرت در قفا دارم
که رو هم گر بره آرم نمی بینم مقابل را

1. Tīhrān ed., Vol. II, p. 26.

2. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 24.

3. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 24.

4. Like the desire to go to India which possesses every (human) heart, there's not a head which does not dance to the tune of thy love. (Ṣā'ib, d. 1080/1670)

همچو عزم سفر هند که در هر دل هست رقص سودای تو در هیچ سري نیست که نیست

Bābur rebuked the sentiments of Khwājah Kalān :

"Give a hundred thanks, Bābur, that the generous Pardoner
Hath given thee Sind and Hind and many a kingdom."

but his grandson, Akbar, otherwise ultra-Indian, seems also to have pined and fretted for his Transoxanian home :

My life has all been spent in exile
and separation, in grief and
sorrow.

عمرم همه در فراق و هجران بگذشت با درد و الم

How useless has been this pre-
cious life—spent in pain and
affliction !

این عمر گرانمایه چه ارزان بگذشت در رنج و ستم

The life which in Samarqand and
Herāt was one round of joy
and pleasure

عمری که بشد صرف سمرقند و هری با عیش و طرب

In Agra, alas ! was utterly
ruined by worry and anger.

افسوس که در اگره ویران بگذشت با غصه و غم

More severe than the Persians is Mr. Vincent Smith in his stricture on Mughal poetry (*Akbar the Great Moghul*, pp. 415-416, Oxford 1917) :

"The versifiers or so-called poets were extremely numerous. Abu'l-Fadl tells us that although Akbar did not care for them, 'thousands of poets are continually at court and many among them have completed a *dīwān* (collection of artificial odes) or have written a *mathnawī* (composition in rhymed couplets).' The author then proceeds to enumerate and criticize 'the best among them' numbering 59 who had been presented at court. He further names 15 others who had not been presented but had sent encomiums to His Majesty from various places in Persia. Abu'l-Fadl gives many extracts from the writings of the select 59 which I have read in their English dress without finding a single sentiment worth quoting, although the extracts include passages from the works of his brother, Fayḍī, 'the king of poets' which Abu'l-Fadl considered to enshrine 'gems of thought.'"

"It is doubtful how far a foreigner is competent to criticize," writes Prof. Browne on the criterion of selection and divergence of foreign from native taste on p. 226 of the 4th volume of his *Literary History of Persia*. "A foreigner may say that he personally admires or dislikes a poet, but I doubt if he should go so far as to class him definitely on this ground as good or bad. The taste of even the Turks and Indians who are more familiar with Persian poetry than we can easily become differs very considerably from that of the Persians who must be reckoned the most competent judges of their own literature."

There can be no doubt, therefore, that Mughal poetry has not appealed to Iranians and Europeans—to those who have read it in the original and to those who have read it in translations. Does the fault lie with Mughal poetry or with the critics or with

both? And if the fault lies with Mughal poetry, why have the critics not explained, analysed and dissected the fault?

Now a criticism based on translations is of doubtful value. Every precious stone committed to a cunning polisher grows more effulgent by the loss of substance, but a translation of chronograms, puns and antiphonies in which Mughal poetry happens to be particularly rich is not the cutting of a gem but its pulverization. The weight remains but the size and colour of the stone are gone. And even the weight suffers loss when the translation is inaccurate. The third volume of Badā'ūnī's *Mūntakhabu't-Tawārīkh* written during Akbar's lifetime in 1004 A.H. is a mine of information on Mughal poetry and it has been translated into English by an eminent scholar, Sir Wolseley Haig. But can we judge Mughal poetry by Sir Wolseley's translation? Here is his rendering of one of Marwī's couplets in praise of the Prophet's ascension to Heaven:

The sweet-voiced nightingale of the garden of revelation
Whose eyes were anointed with the antimony of us base crows.¹
خوش الحان عندلیب باغ ابلاغ مکحل نرگش از کحل ما زاغ

It is a Persian verse and in Persian ما means 'we' and زاغ means 'crows'—whence "us base crows." But ما here is "did not turn aside"—an Arabic citation from the *Holy Qur'ān*, chapter 53, verse 17: *ما زاغ البصر وما طغى* i.e. "the eye (of the Prophet) did not turn aside nor did it exceed the limit" at the time of his ascension to Heaven. An apposite citation from the *Holy Qur'ān* is misconstrued as Persian, and a flawless diamond has been ground to powder!

So much for the critic who has read Mughal poetry in an English dress. To proceed now to the Persians, "the most competent judges," as Prof. Browne says, "of their own literature."

Persian criticism of Mughal poetry is altogether vague: not a single Persian critic has given the reasons for his dislike of Mughal poetry. In his *Literary History of Persia*, Vol. IV, p. 245, Prof. Browne gives one of these reasons, namely, Mughal disparagement of Iranian heroes. Says 'Urfī (*Shi'ru'l-'Ajam*, Vol. III, p. 88):

Judge fairly why should Abu'l-Faraj Rūnī and Anwarī not deem death an unexpected advantage?
انصاف بده بوالفرج و انوري امروز بهر چه غنیمت نشاندند عدم را

In God's name, let them be miraculously restored to life—to pick up my pen when I have cast it away.
بسم الله ز اعجاز نفس جان ده شان باز تا من قلم اندازم و گیرند قلم را

None can produce my soul-entrancing verses, neither Anwarī nor any other fellow.
تفرجي که من از بهر روح ساز دهم نه انوري نه فلاني دهد نه بهاني

Khāqānī wanted the life-giving breath of Jesus—wherefore I am sending these verses to Shirwān by the morning breeze.
دم عیسی تمنا داشت خاقانی که برخیزد بامداد صبا اینک فرستادم بشروانش

1. English translation of Badā'ūnī's *Muntakhab* by Sir Wolseley Haig, Vol. III, p. 250, Cal. 1925.

Wherefore did Sa'dī glory in a handful of the earth of *Shīrāz*, if he did not know that it would be my birthplace and abode? نازش سعدي بمشت خاک شیراز از چه بود گر نمیدانست باشد مولد و ماوای من

Invidious comparisons, however, are not confined to persons: they extend to places and monuments held in national esteem:

1. By Qāsim Arslān (Badā'ūnī's *Muntakhab*, text, III, p. 185) who died in 995 A.H.:

The torrents rushing down the slopes of the grand fort (of Ajmere) would carry away a thousand mountains like Alwand and Elburz. برد سيل آن قلعه پر شکوه هزاران چو الوند و البرز کوه

2. By Mullā Ṭughrā (*Kulliyāt*, Bankipore MS., List No. 677, f. 382^a) who died in 1078 A.H.:

Two hundred Arches of Ctesiphon do not make a single brick of the city-wall of Delhi. دو صد طاق کسري چو گردد فراهم نباشد چو یک خشت دیوار دهلي

Another reason is the obvious fact that though the poets were born in Persia, their poetry was born in India and grew up under the influence of Hindī. This growth was in three different directions. Firstly, new words were coined, e.g. شکسته نواز

the mender of the broken' for 'His Majesty'; 'a fief' for مستغل (Qudsī's *Kulliyāt*, Bankipore MS., List No. 684 f. 122^b):

He summoned the army-chiefs and sent them to their jāgīrs (fiefs). سران سپه را ز ره خواند پیش فرستاد شان سوي جاگیر خویش

Secondly, the original meaning of words was distorted: "gharīb" means foreigner: in India, it means a 'destitute':

On the graves of poor people, like ourselves, there is neither a lamp nor a rose: (here) no moth burns its wings; no nightingale sings a song. بر مزار ما غریبان نی چراغی نی گلی نی پر پروانه سوزد نی صدای بلبل

A Persian, however, would read "on the graves of foreigners like ourselves;" and obviously fail to appreciate the charm of the verse ascribed by some to the Empress Nūr Jahān and by others to the Princess Zību'n-Nisā.

Thirdly, Hindī words which no Persian can understand, were incorporated in the Mughal poetry of India, for example:

1. By the Emperor Akbar, d. 1014 A.H. ('*Urafātu'l-Āshiqīn*, Bankipore MS. No. 685, f. 121^a): "chūrī" is a bangle. Notice the play on *Manyār* and 'man + yār':

Because of separation from Miss Manyār my heart is lacerated with grief. من یار غم زدست مهجوری او منیار که خون شد دلم از دوری او

Seen in the mirror of the sky is not a rainbow but the reflection of her bangle (fallen off from the wrist). در آئینه چرخ نه قوس قزح است عکسیست نمایان شده از چو روي او

2. Also by Akbar : چیتہ not یوزپلنگ is the word used for the hunting-leopard and کاله not آهو سیاه for the antelope :

The hunting-leopard of the king has caught the antelope : his blood has made the field a bed of tulips. چیتہ پادشاه کاله گرفت خون او دشت را چو لاله گرفت

3. By Kāhī, d. 988 A.H. :

When it attacks the deer, the king's cheetah becomes all eyes. چیتہ¹ شاه که او صید کند آهو را همه تن چشم شده تا که ببیند او²

4. By Qāsim Arslān, d. 995 A.H. :

Look at His Majesty's horoscope : at the time of hunting, his falcon seizes the phoenix and his cheetah, the lion. طالع و بخت هایون بین که هنگام شکار باشد و بازت های و چیتہ ات ضیغم گرفت

5. By the Emperor Jahāngīr, d. 1037 A.H. : "the King's cheetah has seized the antelope"—to which a courtier replied, "with blood the field has become a bed of tulips" :

چیتہ پادشاه زد کاله گشت صحرا ز خون پر از لاله

6. By Ṭālib-i-Āmulī, poet-laureate of Jahāngīr : "rām-rangī," not "bādah" is used for the evening cup of wine :

We are not opposed to the morning draught but we maintain that our evening cup of wine produces an entirely different intoxication. نثیم منکر صہبا ولیک میگوئیم کہ رام رنگی ما نشہ دگر دارد

7. By Abū Ṭālib Kalīm, poet-laureate of Shāh Jahān : "mahājan," not "tājir," is used for a general merchant :³

In the shop of every general merchant (of Agra) is contained all the produce of the sea and mine. فتادہ در دکان یک مہاجن همه سرمایہ دریا و معدن

8. Again by Kalīm :⁴

Set not thy heart on the promises of the pān-seller : the outcome thereof is nought but grief. منہ بر وعدہ تنبویان دل کہ جز خون خوردن از و ی نیست حاصل

1. In original MS. چتہ

2. The او refers to the deer : "that it may see the deer."

3. Kulliyāt-i-Kalīm, Hyderabad State Library, MS. No. 1225 f. 73a.

4. Ibid., f. 73b et seq. Also Shī'ru'l-'Ajam, Vol. III, p. 211.

What shall I say of the clean beauty of the laundry-maid ?
What shall I say of that unveiled darling ?

ز حسن شسته دھوبی چگویم از آن بی پرده محبوبی چگویم

Silly and pretty is the Pathān girl whose vanity makes life impossible.

غرور حسن با جہل پشہانی چو گردد جمع نتوان زندگانی

The fair Rājput idols, born to Muslims, have thrown to the winds the patience of lovers.

بتان راجپوت و شیخ زاده شکیب عاشقان بر باد داده

What a flaming candle without smoke is the Champā flower which sets ablaze a pile of aloeswood !

چہ چنپہ شعلہ شمعی ست بیدود کہ آتش میزند در خرمن عود

I have to visualize symmetry, when I describe the Mawlsarī flower.

ز موزونان نظر دریوزہ دارم کہ وصف مولسری را برنگارم

The Gurhal flower knows no season, for it is ever in bloom like the face of the beloved.

گل گرھل نہ فہمیدست موسم شگفتہ چون رخ یار است دایم

The sapling of the Nīm is so fragrant that the heart of the Tūbā tree in paradise is rent with envy.

نہال نیمش از بس خوش نسیم است دل طوبی ز رشک آن دو نیم است

The pān-juice has displaced the lip-stick ; the dhobie, the sāqī ; the Pathān girl and the Rajput maiden, the fair ones of *Khaṭā* (Cathay) and *Khutan* ; the Champā and Mawlsarī, the jessamine and the anemone ; the Gurhal and the Nīm, the Arghawān and the Chanār. Why blame the Persian if he finds the Indian air a trifle oppressive ?

With Mullā Ṭughrā who came to India from Meshed during the beginning of Shāh Jahān's reign and died in Kashmīr in 1078/1667 the Indian air thickens and deepens. Mullā Ṭughrā toured through the whole length and breadth of India from Peshawar to Hyderabad-Deccan, and Gujarat to Bengal and wrote a descriptive praise of all the provinces and the cities he visited, Bengal, Panipat, Tanisar, Delhi, Oudh, Mutthra, Agra, Etawah, Banaras, Orissa, Hyderabad, Ajmere, Gujarat, Tattah, Lahore, Peshawar and Kābul. Says he in his unpublished *Kulliyāt*, Bankipore MS., List No. 677, f. 382^a, *et seq* :

Whosoever drinks the water of Panipat becomes glib-tongued like a parrot.

ز پانی پت آنکس کہ نوشیدہ پانی چو طوطی شدہ سبز رطب اللسانی

Two hundred Arches of Ctesiphon do not make a single brick of the city-walls of Delhi.

دو صد طاق کسری چو گردد فراہم نباشد چو یک خشت دیوار دہلی

The fresh air of Mutthra makes every stone brought from the mountain-side an entrancing idol.

گر از کوه آرند در مترہ سنگی شود از ہوایش بت شوخ و شنگی

Khidr comes to the Agra road to be a guide for the tourist who loves Agra.

خضر میدود بر سر راه اگره که گردد دلیل هواخواه اگره

And if thou thinkest Khutan is superior to Oudh, thou art mistaken : hold off thy speech.

گراز اوده بهترشاری ختن را خطا میکنی، واگذار این سخن را

Every Indian city is one vast treasure-house but let there be no misunderstanding : the poet's praise is mere art for art's sake : he has not been inspired as he himself states in *Hindī* by considerations of food and drink, give and take :

مرا زین دیاری سراپا خزینه "نه لینه نه دینه نه کانه نه پینه"

Excellent for home-consumption, can this kind of poetry be expected to circulate in *Tihirān* and *Iṣfahān* ?

In poets born in India, the Indian element is naturally more pronounced : it reaches its peak in the works of *Fayḍī* who is among the few Muslim Sanskritists India has produced. He translated *Bhāskara's* mathematical treatise, the *Līlāvati* in 995 A.H., the first two parts of the *Mahābhārata* in 997 ; and produced the *Shāriqul-Ma'rafat*, the *Kathā Sārit Sāgar* and the mathnawī named *Nal Daman* in 1003 A.H. Here is a fragment reserved for the elite. Commenting on a stiff verse of *Adīb-i-Pīshāwarī*, 'Abdu'r-Rasūl had said : " Only one man in a thousand can understand this verse. " " I have written the verse for that one man " was *Adīb's* reply. But to return to the fragment. (India Office MS. of *Fayḍī's dīwān*, No. 3155, f. 289^a).

ز سرطان است دُها و آنگهی بهر اسد ماٹا
بدان صورت که عقب راست نوجا، قوس را بهادا
حکیم هند بست این نقش حکمت با دل دانا
فروغ کوکب بخت شهنشاه جهان آرا

حمل آلا و ثور اوبا و جوزا را بود کاچها
دگر از سنبله پاٹها و از میزان بود راتا
پس آنکه جدی کهه که، دلوگوسا، حوت را داجها
الهی باد تا باشد سپهر و گردش اختر

For the Ram, *Ālā* ; for the Bull, *Ūbā* ; for the Twins, *Kāchhā* ; for the Crab, *Dāhā* ; for the Lion, *Māṭā*.

For the Virgin, *Pāṭhā* ; for the Scales, *Rātā* ; for the Scorpion, *Nawjā* ; for the Archer, *Bhādhā*.

For the Goat, *Khakha* ; for the Bucket, *Gawsā* ; for the Fish, *Dājhā*—this wise law has been laid down by the philosophers of India.

Till movement belongs to the spheres and the planets, may the star of His Majesty's good fortune retain its brilliance !

Hindus do not name their children blindly : the auspicious names differ according to the position of the Sun in the Zodiacal Sign at the time of birth. In Aries, the auspicious names are *Ālā*, i.e., those which begin with *Ā* and *Lā*, *Amar Singh*, *Lālā Rām* ; in Taurus, they should begin with *Ūbā*, i.e., *Ū* and *Bā*, *Umrao Singh*, *Bābū Lāl* ; in the Gemini, with *Kāchhā*—*Kā* and *Chhā*, *Kāshī Rām*, *Chhattar Singh* ; in Cancer, with *Dāhā*—*Dā* and *Hā*, *Dāl Chand*, *Harī Singh* ; in Leo, with *Māṭā*—*Mā* and *Tā*, *Mān Singh*, *Tābar Singh* ; in Virgo with *Pāṭhā*—*Pā* and *Ṭhā*, *Pāṭī Rām*, *Ṭhākur Singh* ; in Libra with *Rātā*—*Rā* and *Tā*, *Rām Singh*, *Tārā Chand* ; in Scorpio, with *Nawjā*—*Naw* and

Jā, Nawbat Rām, Jānkī Parshād; in Sagittarius, with Bhādhā—Bhā and Dhā, Bhārī Chand, Dhani Rām; in Capricornus, with Khakha—Kha and Kha, Khaim Chand, Khamman Singh; in Aquarius, with Gawsā—Gaw and Sā, Gomtī Parshād, Sādhū Parshād; and in the Pisces, with Dājhā—Dā and Jhā, Dātā Rām, Jhamman Singh. How many Indians know this? And can the outsider know what the householder does not know?

Nevertheless it is not because of Indian words or names or riddles that Persians have become indifferent to Mughal poetry: the cause lies deeper in the heart of things. Khān Zamān, governor of Jawnpūr, killed as a rebel in 974 A.H., had composed the following verse, Badā'ūnī's *Muntakhab*, text, Vol. III, p. 238:

باریک چو موئی ست میانی که تو داری گویا سر آن موست دهانی که تو داری

Slender as a hair is thy waist: thou wouldst say, the end of that hair is thy mouth.

This verse produced a flutter in the dove-cot. "Thy mouth is Khidr's fountain of life," said Badā'ūnī, "and thy tongue is a fish in that fount."

سر چشمه خضراست دهانی که تو داری ماهی ست در آن چشمه زبانی که تو داری

Another poet said that the sweetheart's mouth was only an imaginary thing, really incorporeal, to which the sweetheart replied: "Thou art right."

گفتم که گمانی ست دهانی که تو داری گفتا که یقین است گمانی که تو داری

The Mughal poet may be right if finding the hair-thin mouth of the sweetheart a bit too thick he reduces it to zero; but I think the Persian is even more right if finding all this Indian subtlety a bit too thick he also reduces to zero his appreciation of Mughal poetry.

Everyone knows that the sweetheart's face is the full moon and her eyebrows are crescents—but this is not enough for the poet Sultān of Saplak. "How can I liken thy eyebrow to the new moon?" says he, "for I have seen the new moon in every hair of thy eyebrow." (*Muntakhab*, text, Vol. III, p. 238):

چون کنم تشبیه ابرویت بماه نو که من هر سر موئی ز ابرویت هلالی دیده ام

In all countries, at all times, the sweetheart's face is bright, irradiating the home with beams of light and saving much lighting fuel on a dark night, for when she unveils, she is a torch, a burning candle or the full moon or even the resplendent sun. But Ulfatī Qilich Khān who became a commander of 5000 under Akbar goes farther. "When she unveils," says he, "the sun appears no more than a moving particle." (*Muntakhab*, text, Vol. III, p. 188):

تا ز عارض آفتاب من نقاب انداخته ذره سان خورشید را اندر حجاب انداخته

Hitherto the sweetheart had the monopoly of light and lustre: "the brightness of her cheeks would shame those stars as daylight doth a lamp;" and she lies not in a dark grave but a lanthorn for "her beauty makes this vault a feasting presence full of light." But the Mughal poet, Khusrawī of Qā'in is a formidable rival to this skin-deep beauty: all skin and bone with love, his shining bones are so surcharged with inner light that they can function as candles to light his tomb. (*Muntakhab*, text, Vol. III, p. 227):

ز نور عشق باشد خسروی را دل چنان روشن که شمع مرقد او میتوان کرد استخوانش را

Did I say the lover was skin and bone? He is really boneless for, borrowing an idea from Amīr Khusraw, "so much has my mournful body melted in thy absence," says Ashkī of Qum, who died in Agra, "that if thou placest a collar about my neck it falls to my feet."¹

بسکه تن بگداخت بی او ز آتش سودا مرا گر نهی زنجیر بر گردن فتد در پا مرا

And again: "my hair hangs dishevelled from my head down to my feet; my body appears in the midst of it like a single white hair."²

موی ژولیده که آید ز سر من تا پا زان میان موی سفید یست تن من پیدا

Lovers weep profusely:

"In one little body

Thou counterfeit'st a bark, a sea, a wind;
For still thy eyes which I may call the sea
Do ebb and flow with tears; the bark thy body is,
Sailing in this salt flood; the winds, thy sighs;
Who raging with thy tears and they with them,
Without a sudden calm, will overset
Thy tempest-toss'd body."³

Shakespeare drowns the body's boat in a sea of tears and Juliet's fine weeping performance is lost. Not so the Mughal poet, Ātashī of Qandahār who came to India in the company of Bābur and died in Lahore in 973 A.H. Having shed an ocean of tears, he offers a free cruise to his sweetheart on that lachrymal sea. "Behold, without thee, my tears have gradually become a sea; come, sit in my eyes as in a boat and make a voyage of that sea."⁴

سرشکم رفته رفته بی تو دریا شد تماشا کن بیا در کشتی چشمم نشین و سیر دریا کن

Also, it has never occurred to any one to examine what remains in the lover himself when he has shed a sea of tears, rivers of blood. This gap in our knowledge is filled by Yādgār Hālatī: "from weeping there remains not in my liver," says he, "so much moisture that the bird of thine arrow could wet his bill thereon."⁵

نماند آنقدر از گریه آب در جگرم که مرغ تیر تو منقار تر تواند کرد

A bowl of water—کاسه آب—broke in Jahāngīr's hand. "The bowl was delicate and it could not hold its water," said Jahāngīr in an impromptu hemistich:

کاسه نازک بود و آب آرام نتوانست کرد

Thereupon Qāsim Khān, husband of Nūr Jahān's sister, Manīzhah, immediately supplied the antiphony: "seeing my condition, its eye could not restrain its tears:"

دید حالم را و چشمش ضبط اشک خود نکرد

1. Badā'ūnī's Muntakhab, ed. Aḥmad 'Alī, Persian text, Vol. III, p. 186, Calcutta, 1869.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 186.

3. *Romeo and Juliet*, Act III, Sc. V.

4. Muntakhab, III, p. 180.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 222.

As the Persian language has one word—کاسه —for a bowl of water “کاسه آب” and for the socket of the eye “کاسه چشم,” when the word کاسه is used, the mind thinks both in terms of the bowl and the socket. But in order to appreciate Qāsim Khān's repartee, it is necessary to shut the eye to the eye-socket: the bowl breaking in Jahāngīr's hand and spilling its water is not like a breaking socket but like an eye breaking into tears. The super-subtlety of Qāsim Khān, therefore, demands that the socket of the eye be converted into the eye of the socket, the کاسه چشم into چشم کاسه — otherwise nothing breaks, neither Jahāngīr's bowl, nor Qāsim Khān's tears, nor the hearts of the people of Madras.

Summing up, therefore, the general conclusion, the disparagement of national heroes and monuments, the use of unfamiliar words, the distortion of the meaning of familiar words, the coinage of new words, and above all, the hair-splitting subtlety of the Indian mind which makes the sweetheart's mouth the end of a hair and then literally splits the hair (Sahmī in Badā'ūnī's *Muntakhabu't-Tawārīkh*, text, Vol. III, p. 243):

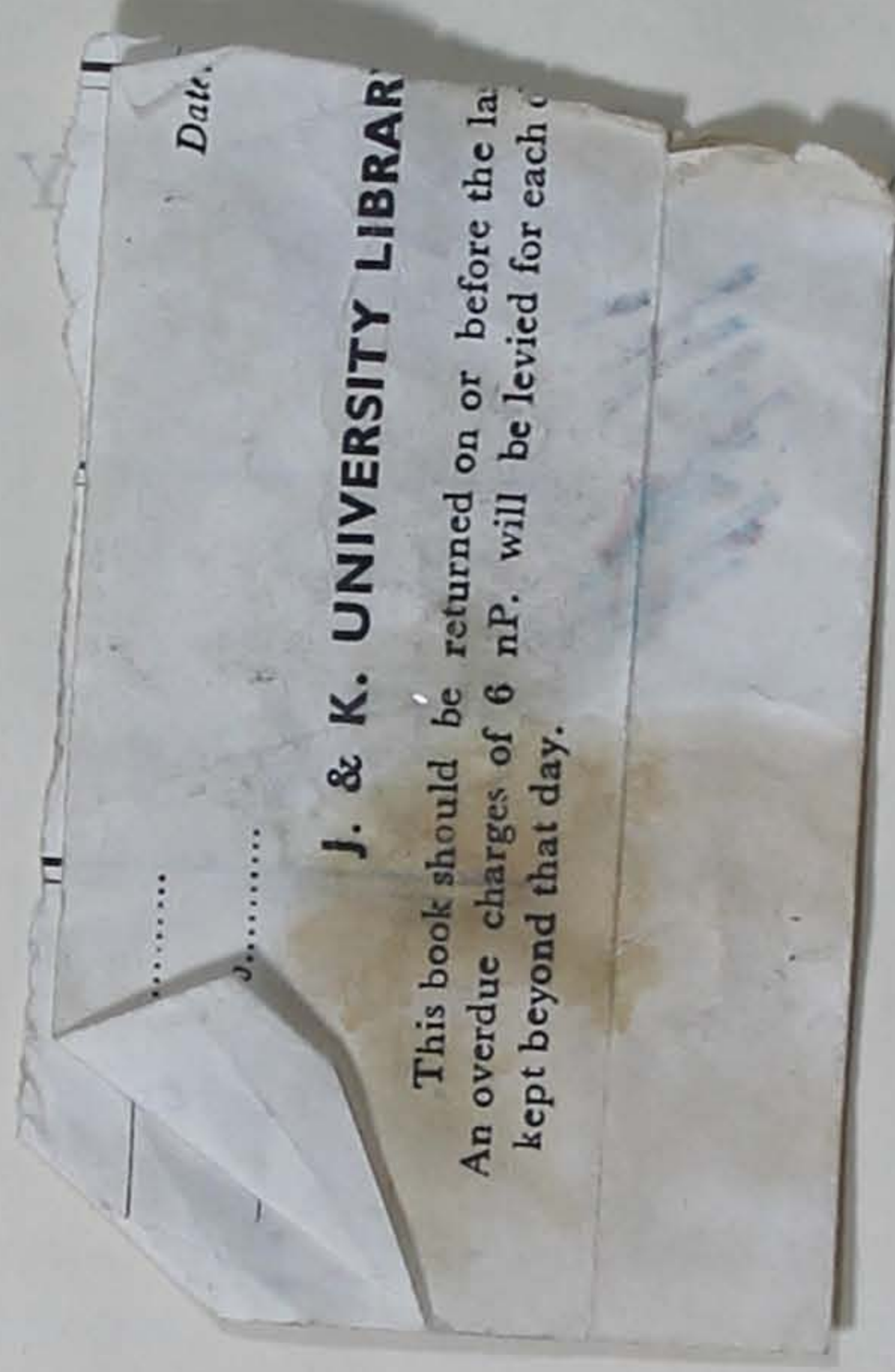
“ Her mouth is like the end of the hair in its delicate proportions, but see
How the sword of her tongue in speech splits the hair ! ”

دهان اوسر موئي بود از نازكي بنگر كه چون تيغ زبانش مي شكافد در سخن او را

—these have been the factors responsible for Persian apathy or antipathy to Mughal poetry. But there are few emeralds without a flaw ; and even flawless emeralds were produced by Mughal India.

MERITS OF MUGHAL POETRY

MERITS OF MUGHAL POETRY



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MERITS OF MUGHAL POETRY

WHAT Prof. Ethe happily calls the Indian summer of Persian poetry is the century 1555-1658 A.D. intervening between Humāyūn's conquest of India and the dethronement of Shāh Jahān, when poets were men of wit :

'Urfī means 'well-known;' and Faydī's father bore the name of Mubārak which means 'auspicious.' So one day 'Urfī called on Faydī whom he found playing with a puppy. 'What may the name of this young master be?' said Faydī :

اسم مخدوم زاده چیست

'His name,' said Faydī, 'is 'Urfī: 'his name is well-known'—to which 'Urfī promptly replied: 'Mubārak bāshad; 'perhaps the name is Mubārak: the name is auspicious.'

when kings were critics :

1. By Hayratī :

همچو پروانه بشمعی سرو کار است مرا که اگر پیش روم بال و پرم میسوزد

Like the moth, my business is with the candle : if I press forward, I shall sear my wings.

Humāyūn's spontaneous emendation : " I shall press forward, even if I sear my wings : "

میروم پیش اگر بال و پرم میسوزد

2. By Fighānī :

مسیحا یار و خضرش رهنا و همعان یوسف فغانی آفتاب من بدین اعزاز می آید

With Jesus as a friend, Khidr as a guide and Joseph riding by his side—in such fashion comes my glorious sun, O Fighānī.

Akbar's spontaneous emendation : " in such fashion comes my glorious horseman, O Fighānī : "

فغانی شهنسوار من بدین اعزاز می آید

when poets were potentially or actually weighed against silver, when a hundred thousand tankahs were paid for stealing an ode and when the human mind worked in flashes of lightning :

“ The Emperor Humāyūn,” writes Badā’ūnī,¹ “ was one night in conversation with Bayram Khān who was overcome by drowsiness. ‘ Ha ! Bayram Khān ! It is to you that I am speaking,’ said Humāyūn reprovingly. ‘ Yes, sire,’ replied Bayram, ‘ I am attentive ; but I have heard that in the service of kings, a watch should be kept over the eyes, and among darvishes a watch should be kept over the heart, and among learned men a watch should be kept over the tongue ; and I was wondering over which I should keep a watch, for Your Majesty is at once a king, a darvish and a learned man.’ ”

Equally smart was Bayram’s reply when he received the following impromptu quatrain from Humāyūn in 955/1548 : “ O companion of my dejected heart, well-proportioned in mind and body ; all the time I think of thee. How fares it with thee and dost thou fret for me ? ”²

اي آنكه انيس خاطر محزوني چون طبع اطفيف خويشتن موزوني
بي ياد تو نيستم زماني هرگز آيا تو ياد من محزون چوني ؟

“ O thou who art essentially the Shadow of God and can never be overpraised,” replied Bayram, “ since thou knowest how in thy absence it fares with me, why dost thou ask me how I fret for thee ? ”³

اي آنكه بذات سايه بيچوني از هر چه ترا وصف كنم افزوني
چون ميداني كه بي تو چون ميگذرد چون ميپرسی كه در فراقم چوني ؟

And yet this remarkable man equally brilliant in the field and the palace, with his sword and his tongue, whose *dīwān* of Persian and Turkish verses was in every man’s hand, found it fit to plagiarize a *ghazal* of Hāshim Qandahārī, putting the lines into a different arrangement and offering him 60,000 tankahs by way of compensation. “ Is this enough ? ” asked Bayram. “ Sixty is too little,” replied the greedy poet, upon which the figure was rounded off to a lakh of tankahs, i.e., Rs. 10,000. Here is that *ghazal* of which the exordium is Hāshim’s :⁴

من كيستم عنان دل از دست داده وز دست دل براه غم از پا فتاده
Who am I ? One who has allowed the reins of his heart to slip from his hands and without the restraining hand of his heart, has fallen off on the road of grief—

1. *Muntakhab*, Vol. III, Eng. tr., p. 267.

2. *Firishṭah*, Neval Kishore ed., p. 239.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 239.

4. *Muntakhab* of Badā’ūnī, Vol. II, Eng. tr., p. 36.

See also *Dīwān-i-Bayram Khān*, ed. Sir E. Denison Ross, Calcutta, 1910, p. 36, where all the seven verses of the *ghazal* are given.

Who is wandering like a madman بی اختیار سر به بیابان نهاده
in the skirts of the mountains,
and without a will of his own
is heading off to the desert.

Sometimes like a candle burning گه چون فتیله با دل آتش فتاده
in the fire of his heart ; some-
times like a wick burning in
the heart of fire.

Little or much is more or less هرگز نگفته‌ایم کمی یا زیاده
unknown to me, Bayram, who
hath never uttered the words,
'more or less.'

It was altogether an extraordinary period, this period of Humāyūn, Akbar, Jahāngīr and Shāh Jahān. "What's in a name?" says Shakespeare. And yet associated with a *pen-name* is the story of an attempted murder ; and clustering round mere names are some of the most exquisite verses that exist in literature. I shall, first of all, give the story that nearly brought on the darkness of death ; then cite the verses more effulgent than stellar and lunar and solar light.

"The poet Sultān of Saplak," writes the contemporary Badā'ūnī, "had a disposition well attuned to poetry. When he saw Khān Zamān (governor of Jawnpūr) who also used Sultān as a poetical name and presented to him an ode in his praise, the Khān sent him, as a reward for it, a thousand rupees and a robe of honour, together with a request that he would, for his sake, change his poetical name. He sent back the gift and said : 'Sultān Muḥammad is my name which was given to me by my father. How can I give it up ? Moreover I wrote poetry under this name many years before you did and obtained much fame by it.' Khān Zamān replied : 'If you do not give up the name, I will throw you under the feet of an elephant,' and being enraged, he had an elephant brought on the spot. Sultān said, 'Ah ! Good fortune is mine ! I shall attain martyrdom !' After Khān Zamān had intimidated and threatened him for a long time, Mawlānā 'Alāu'd-Dīn Lārī, the Khān's tutor, suggested that an ode should be selected from the *dīwān* of Mawlānā Jāmī which was at hand, and if Sultān of Saplak could answer it extemporaneously he should be pardoned ; if not, the Khān should do with him as he had proposed. The poet having stood the test, Khān Zamān gave him double the original reward and dismissed him with honour."

Can such things be or have we eaten on the insane root that takes the reason prisoner ?

Puns, chronograms, satires, original similes and concepts constitute the salient merits of Mughal poetry. I shall present a series of illustrative examples for, as the poet Sa'dī says, "Musk is that which exhales fragrance and not which is labelled 'musk' by the druggist."

1. By Khān Zamān, governor of Jawnpūr† 974 who had sent Ghazālī, d. 980, a purse of a thousand rupees, inviting him to court :¹

Since thou hast not been esteemed at thy proper value (in the Deccan), take heed or rather *take thy head* and come (for the head of Ghazālī is '*ghayn*' and the numerical value of غ is 1000).

چونکہ ببقدر بودہ آنجا سر خود را بگیر و بیرون آئی

2. By Hakīm 'Aynu'l-Mulk Dawā'i of Shīrāz, who was sent as an envoy to Chingiz Khān of Gujarāt in 1564 A.D., as an ambassador to 'Alī 'Adil Khān of Bijāpūr in 1577, became Ṣadr of Bengal in 1581 and Dīwān of Agra in 1585 and died in 1003 A.H./2nd September, 1595. 'Mardum' means 'a gentleman' and also 'a pupil of the eye :'²

Remain in thy house, my little tear : well-born pupils (*mardum*) seldom stir out of their homes.

منہ ای طفل اشک از خانہ چشمم قدم بیرون

کہ میآیند مردم ز اداها از خانہ کم بیرون

3. By Mawlānā Sa'du'd-Dīn Rahā'i of Khawāf :³

O my darling, desert me not like a tear : be kind and remain in the pupil of my eye.

ز چشم من چو اشک ای نازنین من روان مگذر

زمانی مردمی کن اینچنین از مردمان مگذر

4. By Tālib-i-Āmulī, poet-laureate to Jahāngīr from 1028 to 1036 A.H. 'Hazār' means 'a nightingale' and also 'a commander of 1000 :'⁴

I am *hazār* even if I am not *hazār*—aesthetically, if not officially, i.e., I am a nightingale even if I am not a commander of 1000.

بگلزار معنی هزار فصیحم بمنصب چہ شد نیستم گر هزاری

5. By Tālib-i-Āmulī to I'timādu'd-Dawlah who had appointed him his seal-keeper in 1028 A.H. 'Muhr' means 'a seal ;' and 'mihr' means 'love :'⁵

I am thy old and tested servant ; and now thou art entrusting me with thy seal (*muhr*).

منت بندہ داغدار قدیم بخادم کنون مہر خود میسپاری

When I have thy love, do I need thy seal ? Better far to have thy *mihr* (love) than to have thy *muhr* (seal).

چو مہر تو دارم چہ حاجت بہ مہرم مرا مہرداری بہ از مہرداری

6. By Tālib-i-Āmulī to Jahāngīr who had asked him to come to court with his beard cut :⁵

Thy assembly is paradise ; and an uncut fellow has no place therein.

چہشت است بزم تو و در چہشت من نا تراشیدہ را راہ نیست

1. Badā'ūnī's Muntakhab, Vol. III, text, p. 170.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 223.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 234.

4. Shibli's Sh'iru'l-'Ajam, Vol. III, p. 177.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 183.

7. By Abū Ṭālib Kalīm, poet-laureate of Shāh Jahān, when the Rohilla leaders Sea (*Daryā*) and Ornament (*Payrā*) were beheaded in 1040 A.H. :

When Sea vanished, Ornament also lost his head : thou wouldst say the head of Ornament was a bubble of the Sea (in both senses).

8. The best puns are those of the Mughal Emperors : I shall give one example here; others will be cited under "Royal Poetry." 'Shāh Jahān' means 'the king of the world'; and with Mumtāz Maḥal by his side, the Emperor Shāh Jahān was watching from his palace at Agra the river Jamna leap and foam on the stones below. To pay a tribute to his wife, the Emperor said : "To see the lustre of thy face the river cometh all this way." "And because of His Majesty's awe, the awe of Shāh Jahān, it dasheth its head against the stones," replied Mumtāz Maḥal :

آب از هوای روی تو می آید از فرسنگها (شاه جهان) وز هیبت شاه جهان سرمیزند برسنگها (ممتاز محل)

CHRONOGRAMS

Chronograms usually give the year; but it was reserved for Mughal poets to compose chronograms which give the day, the month and the year, without giving the year—for the day and the month give the year. It was also reserved for Mughal poets to give the year by giving the year, i.e., the numerical value of the letters of the year also gives the year. Here are the examples :

1. The birth of Bābur in 888 A.H., the sixth of Muḥarram : *the sixth of Muḥarram*—which gives 888 A.H. :

چون در "شش محرم"، زاد آن شه مکرّم تاریخ مولدش هم آمد "شش محرم" Since that august monarch was born on the sixth of Muḥarram, the date of his birth is *the sixth of Muḥarram*.

2. The first battle of Pānīpat fought in 932 A.H. on the morning of Friday, the seventh of Rajab : *it was morning and Friday and the Seventh of Rajab*—which gives 932 A.H. :

The time and day and the month and year of this victory was *morning and Friday and the seventh of Rajab*.

3. Humāyūn's conquest of Champanir in 940 A.H. on the ninth of the month of Ṣafar : *it was the ninth of the month of Ṣafar*—which gives 940 A.H. :

The intellect gave the date of King Humāyūn's victory : *it was the ninth of the month of Ṣafar*.

4. The birth of Akbar in 949 A.H. on the night of Sunday, the fifth of Rajab : *the night of Sunday, the fifth of Rajab*—which gives 949 A.H. :

The night and day and the month and the year of birth is *the night of Sunday, the fifth of Rajab*.

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5. The birth of Akbar's twins, Hasan and Husayn, which occurred in 972: which occurred in nine hundred and seventy-two—which also gives 972. The chronogram is by Kāhī :

Kāhī inquired of the date of their birth; and the intellect said :
it occurred in nine hundred and seventy-two.

6. The death of Ghazālī in the year 980 : the year nine hundred and eighty, which also gives 980. The chronogram is by Fayḍī :

The intellect wrote the chronogram of his death in two ways (i.e., in figure and words): the year nine hundred and eighty.

7. Akbar's conquest of Gujarāt completed in 980 A.H. on the second of Dhī'l-Qa'dah : the second of Dhī'l-Qa'dah—which gives 980. The chronogram is by Qāsim Arslān :

Behold the auspicious horoscope and good fortune of King Akbar who conquered the province of Gujarāt in a short time.

Since he returned thence to India on the second of Dhī'l-Qa'dah, Arslān's chronogram is the second of Dhī'l-Qa'dah.

8. The death of Kāhī in 988 A.H. on the second of the month of Rabī'u'th-Thānī : the second of the month of Rabī'u'th-Thānī—which gives 988. The chronogram is by Fayḍī :

They sought the month and year of his death; and I replied : "the second of the month of Rabī'u'th-Thānī."

9. The coronation in 1037 A.H. of Shāh Jahān, that is, 'the king of the world' : Shāh Jahān, that is, 'the king of the world'—which gives 1037. The chronogram is by Mīr Ṣālī :

The pen of Destiny wrote as the year of his coronation : Shāh Jahān is Shāh-i-jahān (Shāh Jahān is the king of the world).

10. Shāh Jahān's return from Kashmīr for his second coronation on the Peacock Throne. It was in the year of the Hijrah 1043 : it was in the year of the Hijrah one thousand forty-three, which also gives 1043. The chronogram is by Sa'idā-i-Gilānī :

It was in the year of the Hijrah one thousand forty-three (1043) that he returned to Delhi with royal pomp and a vast army.

11. The birth in 1044 A.H. of Dārā's son, Sulaymān Shukūh : *Sulaymān Shukūh and Sulaymān Shukūh*, i.e., Sulaymān Shukūh and Solomon in dignity—which gives 1044 : “سليمان شكوه و سليمان شكوه”

12. The birth of Awrangzīb, 1027, *Āftāb-i-‘ālam tāb* (world-illuminating sun), which gives 1027; his coronation, 1067, *Āftāb-i-‘ālam tābam* (my world-illuminating sun), which gives 1067; his death, 1117, *Āftāb-i-‘ālam tāb-i-man* (world-illuminating sun of mine), which gives 1117 A.H.

13. Shāh Jahān's conquest of Balkh in 1056 : “God has given him the two worlds : what is Balkh ?”—which gives 1056 A.H. The chronogram is by Abū Ṭālib Kalīm :

“ایزد دو جهان داد باو بلخ چه باشد” تاریخ بود فتح شهنشاه جهان را : God has given him the two worlds : what is Balkh ? (1056) This is the date of His Majesty's conquest.

14. Shāh Jahān's conquest of Balkh in 1056 : “From the kingdom of Turān remove the ruler of Turān and in his place enthrone the Second Lord of Conjunction”—and count. The counting gives 1056. The chronogram is by Naṣirā'i-i-Shīrāzī :

والی توران بر آر از ملک توران وانگهی ثانی صاحبقران بنشان بجایش کن حساب

From the Kingdom of Tūrān, i.e., from 747, remove the ruler of Tūrān, i.e., remove 704; and in his place enthrone the Second Lord of Conjunction, i.e., add 1013—which gives 1056.

This Mughal chronogram inspired the Persian poet, Sulaymān-i-Ṣabāhī to write in 1199 : “The pen of Ṣabāhī wrote : ‘From the Royal Palace, ‘Alī Murād made his exit and Ja‘far Khān sat in his place’”—which gives 1199 :

نوشت کلک صباحی ز قصر سلطانی علی مراد برون شد نشست جعفرخان

From the Royal Palace, i.e., from 550, ‘Alī Murād, i.e., 195, made his exit, i.e., is subtracted; and Ja‘far Khān, i.e., 1004, sat in his place, i.e., is added—which gives 1199.

SATIRES

1. Ousted by Humāyūn from the throne of Kābul, Kāmran had sought refuge with Islām Shāh who had received him as an unwelcome guest. “The movement of the revolving sphere,” said the fallen Prince in an impromptu verse, “has humbled stiff-necked persons and has imposed uncouth fellows over men of culture.”

گردش گردون گردان گردنان را گرد کرد بر سر اهل تمیزان ناقصان را مرد کرد

Later when blinded by Humāyūn's order, he said to the Emperor who had called on him : “whatever thou metest out to me deserves my thanks—whether it be the blinding needle or the piercing blade.”

بر جانم از تو هرچه رسد جای منت است گر ناوک جفاست و گر خنجر ستم

2. By the poet Mīr Rubā'ī Fikrī on the physician Sayfu'l-Mulūk, i.e., the sword of kings, so called because he killed more patients than he cured: "A sharp sword is His Worship Sayfu'l-Mulūk. Yesterday Death said when he had come to take the life of a sick man: 'Everywhere I go, he has been called in first.'"¹

دي اجل ميگفت بهر بردن جان مريض هر کجا رفتيم، پيش از ما علاجي کرده بود

The death in 970 A.H. of Jāmī's grandson whom Sayfu'l-Mulūk unsuccessfully treated is given by the chronogram: Sayfu'l-Hukamā killed (him).

سيف الحکما کشت : ۹۷۰

3. By an unknown poet on the physician Jalāl: "The Angel of Death said to God: 'Thy slave is helpless before Jalāl, the physician. Where I kill one, he kills a hundred. Either depose him or assign to me some other employment.'"²

ملک الموت از جلال طبيب شکوه برد دوش پيش خدا
بنده عاجز شدم ز دست طبيب ميکشم من يکي و او صد تا
يا ورا عزل کن ازین منصب يا مرا خدمت دگر فرما

Physicians, however, have ever been the target of attack. A fine Persian satire says: "If thou wert to continue as the chief physician for a year more, thou alone wouldst be living and everybody else would be dead and gone." Also, "a physician's job is the best, safest and most lucrative: if thy patient recovers, thou hast cured him; if he dies, man is mortal."

4. By Mīr Maḥmūd Maḥwī, Akbar's Chief Secretary for 25 years, died at Agra in 979 A.H., on a horse presented to him by the Emperor Humāyūn: "O exalted King, with an army like Jamshīd's, I have a horse, exceedingly lean and weak. When I mount him, at every two or three steps which he takes, he falls saying: 'Now you carry me for two or three steps.'"³

اي خسرو جم سپاه عالي مقدار دارم اسبي که هست بس لاغر و زار
بروي چوشوم سوار در هر دوسه گام افتد، که تو هم یک دوسه گامي بردار

Similarly, an unknown poet says of a horse: "He goes one or two steps and then says: 'Now do you carry me for an hour or so.'"⁴ And Ṭālib-i-Kalīm says: "Because it is always perspiring, that old horse presented by His Majesty is like a boat sailing in water, or rather at anchor."⁴

همیشه از عرق خویش کشتي است در آب شده بيکجا از لنگر رکاب مقيم

For the sake of comparison, here are two satires on horses by the poets of Irān. Anwarī was presented with such an old horse that it died on the very night of its arrival. On the morrow the poet came to court walking on foot. "Surely we presented you with a horse," said the King. "Yes, sire," replied the poet, "but that horse was so swift of foot that in one night he traversed the distance from the earth to heaven."

آنچنان تيز بود در رفتار که شبشب باختر برسيد

1. Badā'ūnī's *Muntakhab*, text, Vol. III, p. 254.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 227.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 322.

4. *Dīwān-i-Abū Ṭālib Kalīm*, Hyderabad State Library MS., No. 1225, f. 57b.

"Surely we presented you with a horse," said the King to the poet Salmān-i-Sāwajī who had come to court walking on foot. "Yes, sire," replied the poet, "but that horse is at least thirty years senior to me in age and it is disrespectful to sit upon one's elders."

از بنده مهتر است بسی سال راستی گستاخی است بر زبر مهتران نشست

5. By Shaydā on Jahāngīr's poet-laureate, Tālib-i-Āmulī. Tālib means "desirer"; and the Prophet had said: "The world is a carcase; the desirers thereof are dogs" الدنيا جيفة وطالبها كلاب. So says Shaydā: "Night and day, my patron, Desirer—(Tālib)—runs after the carcase of the world. Has he forgotten the Prophet's tradition: 'The world is a carcase and the *desirer* (tālib) thereof is a dog?'"¹

شب و روز مخدومنا طالبا پی جیفه دنیوی در تگ است

مگر قول پیغمبرش یاد نیست که دنیاست مردار طالب سگ است

6. In 1047 A.H., Mullā Shaydā composed the following satire on the poet Mīr of Hamadān whose pen-name was 'Divine'—Ilāhī:²

O my Mīr who has adopted the pen-name of Divine—Ilāhī—it is improper for a man of silt to style himself "divine."

See how the moist and dry stuff in thy verses has made me reject all works—*divine or Divine's*.

ای میر من که کرده الهی تخلصی از مرد لای ارچه الهی شدن خطاست
زین رطب و یابسی که بود در کلام تو گر منکر کلام الهی شوم رواست

ORIGINALITY OF CONCEPT

The poets of the Mughal court were not bereft of ideas and though not more than ten per cent. of Mughal poetry has survived, it is possible to gather from that mine, gems of thought more lustrous than the pearls in the rosary of Shāh Jahān.

1. By Qāsim Khān Mawjī of Badakhshān,³ died 979 A.H.:

Her two nipples of incomparable beauty are as bubbles on the surface of milk. دو پستانش که در خوبی ست یکتا حبایی گشته از شیر آشکارا

2. By Ghazālī of Meshed, died 980 A.H.:

My mind is a pearl-laden sea; my tongue is a tempered blade. 4 بحر است ضمیر من که گوهر دارد تیغی ست زبان من که جوهر دارد

The scratch of my pen is the blare of Resurrection: a bird of heaven am I soaring on the wings of eloquence. صور قلمم نفخه محشر دارد مرغ ملکوتم سخم پر دارد

1. Shibli, Sh'iru'l-'Ajam, Vol. III, p. 182.

2. 'Amal-i-Sāliḥ, Vol. III, p. 405.

3. Badā'ūnī's Muntakhabu't-Tawāriḫ, Calcutta ed., text, Vol III, p. 325.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 172.



1 ای غزالی گریزم از یاری که اگر بد کنم نکو گوید
O Ghazālī, I avoid the friend who speaks well of the evil I do.

من و آن ساده دل که عیب مرا همچو آئینه رو برو گوید
I prefer the plain blunt fellow who, like a mirror, reveals my faults to my face.

3. By Ḥaydarī,² died 1002 A.H.:

که ناقص رفتن از عالم چنان است که بیرون رفتن از حمام ناپاک
To leave this perfect world with imperfections on thy head is like emerging unclean from a bath.

4. By 'Aynu'l-Mulk Dawā'ī,³ died 1003 A.H.:

در کنارم ننشیند هرگز طفل اشکم که دویدن دانست
This tear of mine will not be restrained, like the child who has learnt to run.

ای دوائی طلب وصل بتان شعله و پنبه بهم دوختن است
O Dawā'ī, the desire of union with the fair is an attempt to unite flame and cotton (which kiss as they consume).

5. By Sāqī of Meshed:⁴

ز جانم گاه گریه آه دردآلود میخیزد بلی چون آب بر آتش فشانی دود میخیزد
From my soul as I weep arises a sigh of grief, even as smoke arises when water is thrown on fire.

چوتیز بگذرد از من، ز دیده آب بر آید ز دیده آب ز تیزی آفتاب بر آید
When she passes by me quickly, the tears flow from my eyes: aye tears flow from the eyes dazzled by the sun.

6. By Naẓmī of Tabriz:⁵

بجای پری خاتم پری رخساره دیدم نشسته در میان آب آتش پاره دیدم
I saw the fairy-faced Parī Khānum in the bath: I saw a spark of fire sitting in water.

7. By Ghayratī of Shīrāz:⁶

هلاک خنجر آن قاتلم که خون مرا چنان بریخت که یک قطره بر زمین نه چکید
She has shed my blood without shedding my blood— slain me by the dagger of her eye.

8. By Tālib-i-Āmulī, poet-laureate of Jahāngīr:

مزه در جهان نمی بینم دهر گوئی دهان بیمار است
How insipid is life! Thou wouldst say the world was the mouth of a patient.

لب از گفتن چنان بستم که گوئی دهن بر چهره زخمی بود به شد
So completely have I sealed my lips against speech that thou wouldst say the mouth was a wound which has healed.

1. Kulliyāt-i-Ghazālī, Br. Mus. MS. Add 25023, f. 411b.

2. Badā'ūnī's Muntakhabu't-Tawārikh, Calcutta ed., text, Vol. III, p. 219.

3. Ibid., pp. 231-232.

4. Ibid., p. 246.

5. Ibid., p. 378.

6. Ibid., p. 292.

ای کاش گوش رغبتم احوال بدی چو چشم تا هرچه گفتی از تو سکر شنودمی
Would that the ear had a squint like the eye so that whatever thou sayest I could hear once more.

مردم ز رشک چند بینم که جام می لب بر لب ت گذارد و قالب تهی کند
I am dying of envy. How long shall I see the cup of wine place its lips on thy lips and pour out its heart?

گه بدل جلوه کند پرتو او گه بچشم قسمت این شد که در آئینه و آبش بینم
Behold His lustre reflected from a mirror and a pool—from my heart and my eyes!

دشنام خلق را ندهم جز دعا جواب ابرم که تلخ گیرم و شیرین عوض دهم
To the evil words I hear I reply with blessings, like a cloud which takes up salt water and gives the sweet.

9. By Ṣā'ib:

دورستان را باحسان یاد کردن همت است
To confer favours on people who are far away is real generosity, for every tree drops fruit at its own feet.

در هیچ پرده نیست، نباشد نوای تو عالم پراست از تو و خالیست جای تو
There is not a note but it hums with thy lays: the world is full of thee; only thy place is empty.

10. By Qudṣī:

بزیر سبزه ره در کوه و صحرا چو از عقد زمرد رشته پیدا
Like the thread of an emerald-necklace is the path winding in the green-clad hills and dales.

روز قیامت هر کسی در دست دارد نامه من نیز حاضر میشوم تصویر جانان در بغل
On the day of judgment every one shall come with his record in his hand: I shall also be there with my sweetheart's portrait tucked under my arms.

قدسی ندانم چون شود سودای بازار جزا او نقد آمرزش بکف من جنس عصیان در بغل
Qudṣī, how shall the bargain be struck? He, with the cash of forgiveness in His hand; I, with my load of sins tucked under my arms.

11. By Abū Ṭālib Kalīm, poet-laureate of Shāh Jahān:

ما ز آغاز و ز انجام جهان بیخبریم اول و آخر این کهنه کتاب افتاد است
We have no knowledge of the beginning and end of the world: the first and last (pages) of this ancient book have fallen out.

وضع زمانه قابل دیدن دوباره نیست روپس نکرد هر که ازین خاکدان گذشت
The way of the world is not worth seeing a second time: not a man looked back when he left this heap of dust.

If walking without eyes is impossible, how, when we have closed our eyes to the world, do we walk out of it ? چشم از جهان چوبستی از میتوان گذشت بی دیده راه اگر نتوان رفت پس چرا

What is this difference in writing, if the hand of the same scribe has written all our scrolls of destiny ? سرنوشت همه گر از قلم تقدیر است اینقدر فرق میان خط یک کاتب چیست

Thanks to the king, so sound is his sleep that the watchman needs a watchman. که باید پاسبانی پاسبان را بعهدش آنچنان در خواب امن است

Were everyone to receive his due share of merit, the pearl would acquire all the water of the ocean. بایستی آب بحر نصیب گهر شود هر کس اگر بقدر هنر بهره یافتی

Since my eyelashes became tearless, they have fallen in my esteem : who cares for the thread devoid of its pearls ? اکنون چه کم رشته که وقتی گهبری داشت تا شد مژه بی اشک فتاد از نظر من

The prohibitionist drinks to your eyes, for they have ruined the taverns. هر کجا میکده هست خراب افتاد است شکر چشم تو کند محتسب شهر کزو

I am dying of grief in the very midst of redressers of grief, like a ship burning at sea. چون آن کشتی که در دریا بسوزد میان غم گساران سوزم از غم

Thou comest soon and yet thou comest late : shouldst thou come sooner than soon what would happen ? از زود اگر زود تر آئی چه شود زود آمدنت نظر بشوقم دیر است

God is One but His unity embraces opposites : He is the First and the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden : هو الاول هو الآخر هو الظاهر هو الباطن . Consequently, even as Divine perfection is equipoise, any nature, the more excellent it is, the better will it be poised till it reaches Prophethood, the height of creature development. Thus it is that the soul feels an essential affection for equipoise, and a pure proportion, wherever observed, is the means of attracting and agitating the spirit. This principle, if prevailing in the particles of elements, is equipoise of temperament, in music is harmony, in gestures grace, in language eloquence, in body beauty, in mind equity. "Thy equity, O king, makes thee a balance," says the Persian poet, Rūdakī :

جز برتری ندانی گوئی که آتشی جز راستی نجوئی گوئی ترازوئی

Thou knowest nought but ascent, art thou a flame ? Thou seekest nought but equity, art thou a balance ?

wherefore, when the king is weighed, he becomes a balance within a balance, for in the words of the Mughal poet, Miān Mīr :

چيزي كه برابري تواند كردن در پله ميزان تو عدل تو بود

What can balance thee is (only) thy double put in the opposite pan.

The reference is to the weighing ceremony of *Shāh Jahān* who, like his father and grandfather, used to be weighed against silver, gold and gems on his birthday and New Year's Day and the money was later on distributed in charity. Says *Abū Ṭālib Kalīm*, the poet-laureate :¹

عجب اگر بدو دنيا دگر فرود آيد سرترازو كز وزن شاه سامان يافت
The balance which has attained equipoise with His Majesty's weight will hardly lower its beam even for the two worlds.

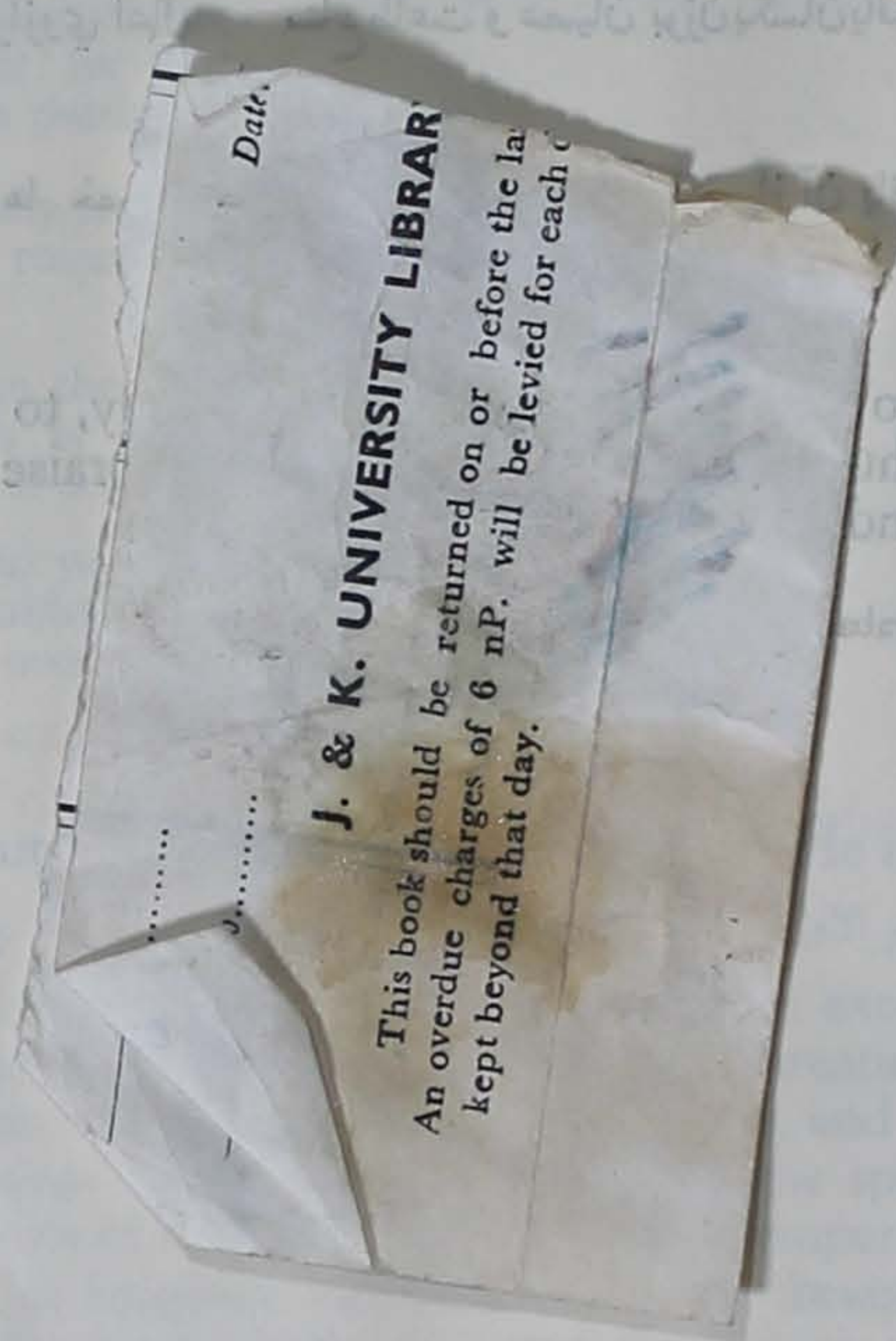
سزد كه برج شرف را بدل كند خورشيد از اين سعادت كز وزن شاه ميزان يافت
With the good fortune which the balance has attained, it would befit the Sun if it were to change its mansion of exaltation (from the Leo to Libra).

هميشه تا نبود در ترازوي اعمال متاع طاعت و عصيان بوزن يكسان يافت
Until, in the balance of actions, the counterpoise of virtue can never be vice,

خفيف باد بميزان ديدها خصمت بدان مشابه كه نتوان سبكتراز آن يافت
May, in public esteem, thy enemy's scale continue to mount with the weight of his sins!

These verses need no praise : to gild refined gold, to paint the lily, to throw a perfume on the violet, to add another hue unto the rainbow, to praise praise which has been literally balanced, is wasteful and ridiculous excess.

1. *Kulliyāt-i-Abū Ṭālib Kalīm*, Hyderabad State Library MS., No. 1225, f. 4b-5a.



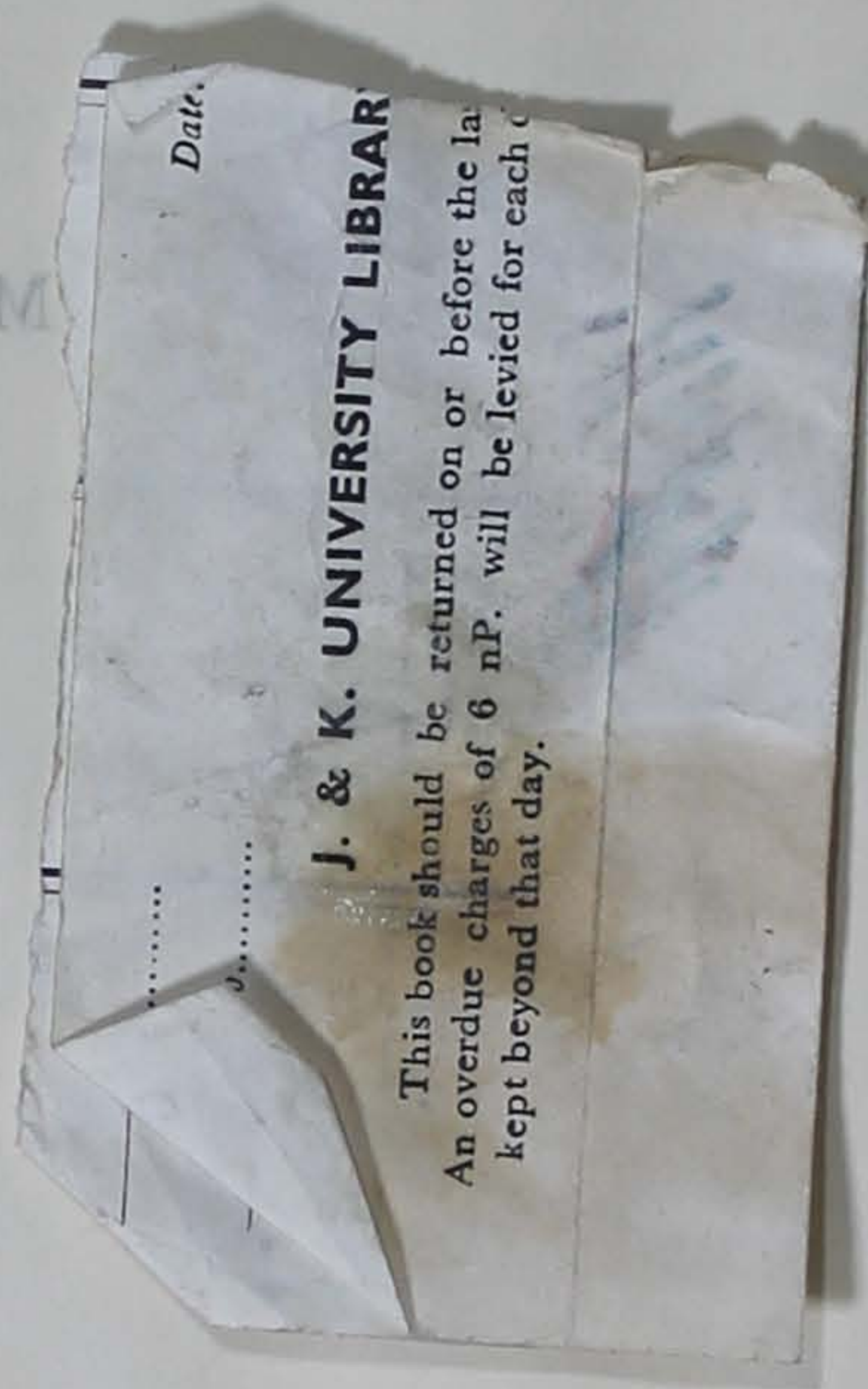
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COURT-POETS OF THE GREAT MUGHALS

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COURT-POETS OF THE GREAT MUGHALS

THE poet-laureates of the Great Mughals were only four : Ghazālī c. 974-980 A.H. and Faydī 988-1004 A.H. under Akbar, Tālib-i-Āmulī 1028-1036 under Jahāngīr and Abū Tālib Kalīm c. 1037-1061 under Shāh Jahān. Aurangzib had no poet-laureates for he was averse to poetry and the fine arts : he abolished music and dismissed the singers who wailed loud and long before the jharok'ha. "Music is dead and we are going to the graveyard to bury it." "Very well," said the Emperor, "make the grave deep so that neither voice nor echo may issue from it."

On the other hand, in the words of Abu'l-Faḍl, "thousands of poets were continually at the court of Akbar." At least fifty of them according to the cumulative evidence of the *Ā'in*, the *Tabaqāt* and the *Muntakhab* (which last work deals with 167 poets of Akbar's time), had produced *dīwāns*, namely : Amānī, Ashkī, Chishtī, Dawrī, Ghaznawī, Judā'ī, Hālatī, Halwā'ī, Hijrī, 'Itābī, 'Ishqī, Kāshifī, Khanjar Beg, Maylī, Mullā Maqṣūd, Mazharī, Nāmī, Nazmī, Nuwaydī, Payrawī, Sarfī, Sipihī, Tashbihī, Hayratī d. 961 A.H., Saqqā d. 962, Ghurbatī d. 966, Bayram Khān d. 968, Waṣlī d. 977, Marwī d. c. 979, Ghazālī d. 980, Rawghanī d. 980, Imāmī d. 981, Rahā'ī d. after 983, Kāhī d. 988, Thānī Khān d. 990, Shīrī d. 994, Mushfiqī d. 994, Nūru'd-Dīn Tar Khān d. 994, Qāsim-i-Arslān d. 995, Thānā'ī d. 996, 'Urfī d. 999, Haydarī d. 1002, Faydī d. 1004, Anīsī d. 1014, Naw'ī d. 1019, Sanjar d. 1021, Nazīrī d. 1021, Zuhūrī d. 1024, Malik-i-Qummī d. 1024, Hayātī d. after 1024 and Muḥammad Sharīf d. 1030. Even to-day 16 of these *dīwāns* exist in the India Office Library, namely of Hayratī, Saqqā, Rahā'ī, Hijrī, Kāshifī, Mushfiqī, Thānā'ī, 'Urfī, Faydī, Naw'ī, Sanjar, Nazīrī, Waṣlī, Malik-i-Qummī, Zuhūrī and Muḥammad Sharīf. To this list additions can be made—for example, by the *dīwāns* of Bayram Khān (ed. Sir E.D. Ross, Calcutta), Ghazālī (British Museum), Qāsim Arslān (Bankipore State Library) and Qāsim-i-Kāhī (Lucknow). Unfortunately, however, not more than half a dozen of these *dīwāns* have been published but the greatest tragedy is that the very eyes of Mughal poetry, the *dīwān* of Marwī and the works of Sa'idā-i-Gilānī, the artist of the Peacock Throne, are lost.

However to Badā'ūnī's list have to be added the poets of the pre-Akbar and the post-Akbar period. Of these latter, excluding the above-mentioned Sa'idā, the most important are Tālib-i-Āmulī, Abū Tālib Kalīm and Hājī Muḥammad Jān-i-Qudsī whose works, together with the rare *dīwān* of Qāsim Arslān, I have examined in MS. form in the Bankipore Library. Rotographs of the unique works of Ghazālī were obtained from the British Museum but the sensational find was the discovery in the house of Prof. Mas'ūd Ḥasan of Lucknow, of the world's solitary copy of the *Dīwān-i-Kāhī*.

PRESENTATION OF POETS AT COURT

When Akbar took his seat on the throne, the audience performed the *kurnish* and then remained standing at their places according to their rank with their arms crossed. The place before the throne remained free: one wing was generally occupied by the grandees of the court and the chief functionaries; on the other wing stood the Qurra, the Mullās and the 'Ulamā.¹ The Mughal Emperors were very punctilious in matters of etiquette. When the poet Niyāzī was presented to Humāyūn, he stepped towards him at the levee with his left foot, whereupon the Emperor remarked that the Mullā was left-handed and commanded him to be led out again and again brought forward.² The poet Sulṭān of Saplak, who was for some time Akbar's teacher, placed himself at a darbār before the Khān-i-A'zam. When the Mīr Tuzak told him to go back, 'why should not a learned man stand in front of fools?' said he, and left the hall and never came back.³ The poet 'Ālim of Kābul, seeing that Abu'l-Faḍl, Qāḍī Khān and others from being Mullās had risen to the rank of Amīrs, petitioned to be admitted as a soldier; but the granting of the petition only made the poet a private, not a military commander (manṣabdār). "By which manṣabdār shall I stand and from what place shall I make my obeisance?" asked the ambitious poet coming to the darbār from one side. "From where you are now standing," said Akbar, penetrating his design.⁴ When the poet Qarārī of Gīlān, brother of Ḥakīm Abu'l-Faḥ, first came to court as a manṣabdār, he provoked much mirth and laughter for he did not know how to put on his sword. "Soldiering does not suit men like me," he replied; and told the story of Akbar's ancestor, Tamerlane, who, in one of his battles, drew up his army in a certain position, and ordered that the laden camels and the footmen and all beasts of burden should take up a position of safety behind the troops, and that the ladies should remain in the rear of the army. At that moment, the learned men asked where their place should be; and Tamerlane replied, "Behind the ladies!" When the story was reported to Akbar as a rare piece of wit on the part of Qarārī, he ordered that he should be sent to Bengal.⁵

The poet Nāmī d. 1015 A.H., who eventually reached under Akbar the command of a thousand and was sent as ambassador to Persia in 1012 describes "the base degrees by which he did ascend." "When I arrived at court," says he, "I tasted the sticks of the ushers and mace-bearers who keep order and had to endure insults; and when after a long period of expectation His Majesty bestowed on me a command of twenty men I lost all my buoyancy and bowed my head in acquiescence." "I am not dejected that things have become ill, not well for me. "'Will be,' 'Will be,' will never be: say, 'Be not' and see what will be."⁶

نیم ملول که کارم نکو نشد بد شد شود شود نشود گو مشو چه خواهد شد

1. Ā'in, I, p. 160, Blochmann.

2. Badā'ūnī's *Muntakhabu't-Tawārīkh*, tr. Sir Wolseley Haig, Vol. III, pp. 496-497.

3. Rashīdu'd-Dīn Waṭwāt says: "Thy darbār is like the sea; wherefore, the weeds float at the surface and the pearls are at the bottom of the sea."

بحر است مجلس تو و در بحر ییخلاف لولو بزیر باشد و خاشاک بر زیر

4. Badā'ūnī, III, p. 375.

5. Ibid., p. 433.

6. Badā'ūnī, English tr., Vol. III, p. 365.

DUTIES OF COURT-POETS

The duties of the court-poet are nowhere defined but they can be gleaned from the *diwāns* of court-poets. Qāsim-i-Kāhī wrote an ode on the astrolabe because of Humāyūn's interest in astronomy; and Ghazālī-i-Meshedī wrote a poem in which the elephant and the hunting-leopard occur in every hemistich, because of Akbar's fondness for elephants and cheetahs. "There are 101 elephants selected for the use of His Majesty;¹ and 1000 leopards are kept in the royal park,"² writes Abu'l-Faḍl.

Kāhī records the birth of the twins, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn born to Akbar—an event which occurred in 972 A.H. in the chronogram: "it occurred in nine hundred and seventy-two:"

Kāhī inquired of the date of their birth; and the intellect replied: "it occurred in nine hundred and seventy-two."

and Khwājah Ḥusayn-i-Marwī gives 963 and 977 A.H., the dates of Akbar's coronation and Jahāngīr's birth respectively in an ode which consists of chronograms throughout, the first hemistichs giving the first, and the second hemistichs, the second date:

One by one, the verses of Marwī are so faultless (963) that in each couplet you will attain your objective twice (977).

The first hemistich thereof is the date of the King's accession (963); from the second, obtain the (date of) birth of the darling of the world (977).

He has also produced eight verses whereof the first hemistich gives 977 and the second hemistich 978, the dates of the birth of Jahāngīr and Murād respectively:³

The heavens have given two sons to the King (977): the faces of both of them are better than the sun (978).

Hail! The birth of the heir-apparent is contained in the first hemistich (977)—so says each couplet (978).

And from the second hemistich of these couplets (977), deduce the (date of) birth of the second prince (978).

How the sense of these chaste verses agrees with their numerical value! Alas for the lost *diwān* of Marwī!

1. *Ā'in*, Vol. I, p. 130.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 288.

3. *Muntakhab*, text, Vol. II, p. 133.

Court-poets were essentially court-historians: Qāsim Arslān, for example, records the dates of Akbar's conquest of Gujarāt, 980 A.H.:¹

Behold the auspicious horoscope and good fortune of Akbar Bādshāh, who, in a short time, conquered the province of Gujarāt.

طالع و بخت همایون بین که در اندک زمان
کرد فتح کشور گجرات اکبر بادشاه

Since he returned thence to India on the second of Dhi'l-Qa'dah, the second of Dhi'l-Qa'dah, Arslān, is the date (of conquest).

چون از آنجا دویم ذی القعدة عازم شد بهند
ارسلان تاریخ آن از "دویم ذی القعدة"، خواه

and of Bengal, 982 A.H.:²

That King, with the pomp of Jamshīd, arrived in Bengal; and the chronogram of conquest is: "Akbar Shāh came to Bengal attended a hundred times by good fortune."

رسید آن خسرو جم جاه شد تاریخ اجلالش
بصد اقبال اکبر شاه آمد سوی بنگاله

Sa'idā-i-Gilānī, known most appropriately as the nonpareil—Bibadal Khān—whose verses exist only in fragments preserved in the *Tuzuk-i-Jahāngīrī*, the *Pādshāh-Nāmah* and the *Shāh Jahān Nāmah*, supplies interesting minutiae on the reigns of Jahāngīr and Shāh Jahān, for example, (i) the conquest of the Kāngra Fort in 1029, (ii) the fall of a meteorite in 1030 from which a dagger, a knife and two swords were made for Jahāngīr, (iii) the construction of a mosque inside the Kāngra Fort in 1031, (iv) the death of Mumtāz Maḥal in 1040, and (v) the coronation of Shāh Jahān on the Peacock Throne in 1044 A.H. I shall re-quote the verses which an Emperor deemed it an honour to quote:⁴

I

The Emperor of the world, King Jahāngīr, son of Akbar the King, who, by the decree of Fate, has become King of the Seven Climes.

شهنشاه زمان شاه جهانگیر ابن اکبر شاه

که شد بر هفت کشور بادشاه از حکم تقدیری

World-taker (Jahāngīr), world-bestower, world-possessor and world-monarch through whose youthful luck the old world has acquired safety.

جهانگیر 3 و جهان بخش و جهان دار و جهان دارا

که از بخت جوان او جهان ایمن شد از پیری

With his conquering sword, he took the Fort and a mental flash supplied the date: "Jahāngīr's good fortune took this fort"—1029.

بشمشیر غزا این قلعه را بکشود تاریخش

خرد گفتا: "کشود این قلعه اقبال جهانگیری"

1. *Dīwān-i-Qāsim Arslān*, Bankipore MS., No. 249, f. 51a.

2. *Ibid.*

3. Notice the pun on the Emperor's name.

4. All of them are taken from the *Tuzuk-i-Jahāngīrī*, Neval Kishore edition, p. 349 and p. 335.

By King Jahāngīr, the world obtained order : raw iron in the form of a meteorite fell in his reign.

With that iron, by his peremptory order, a dagger, a knife and two swords were made.

III

Nūru'd-Dīn Jahāngīr, son of Akbar the King, is a monarch who has no equal in the world.

The cloud of his sword, whereof a drop can raise a flood, took the Kāngra Fort with the aid of God.

This mosque, radiant with light, where the foreheads of worshippers beam with lustre, was built by his order.

And an invisible voice gave the date of construction : "The mosque of King Jahāngīr is luminous"—1031.

IV¹

When Mumtāz Maḥal left this world, fairies opened in her face the door of paradise.

And angels composed the chronogram : "May Paradise be the abode of Mumtāz Maḥal!"—1040.

Palace news, in chronograms cut like the inner screen of the Tāj, are also a noticeable feature of the poetry of Abū Ṭālib Kalīm who records the birth and coronation of Shāh Jahān, the births and marriages of his four sons, Dārā Shukūh, Shāh Shujā', Awrangzīb and Murād, the defeat of the Uzbeks in 1038, the completion of the palace inside the Agra Fort in 1048 and the conquest of Balkh in 1056. Exigencies of time and space will only permit the citation of some of these chronograms in their barest form :

1. Shāh Jahān's birth, 1000 A.H., "the king of the kings of the world, the qiblah of the universe :

شاه شاهان جهان قبله عالم

1. Pādshāh Nāmah of 'Abdu'l-Ḥamīd Lahori, Vol. I, p. 389.

2. Dārā's birth, 1024, "the first rose of the royal garden :"
گل اولین گلستان شاهي
3. Awrangzīb's birth, 1027, "the world-illuminating sun :"
آفتاب عالم تاب
4. The defeat of the Uzbeks, 1038, "the conquering army :"
لشکر فتح¹
5. Dārā's marriage with the daughter of Prince Parwīz, 1042 : "the two auspicious stars of the mansion of glory have united :"
قران کرده سعدین برج جلال²
6. Shāh Shujā's marriage with the daughter of Rustam Mīrzā, 1042, "the litter of Bilqīs has come to Jamshīd, its journey's end :"
مهد بلقیس بسر منزل جمشید آمد³
7. The completion of the Agra Palace, 1048, "the residence of the high-placed Emperor :"
سرای شهنشاه والا محل ; and again, "the palace of good fortune and the place of good luck :"
قصر اقبال و محل دولت

The Persian dread of the sea :⁴ "the wise man will avoid the boat and the sea : he will not walk to his own grave or allow himself to be nailed alive in a coffin :"
Kulliyāt-i-Ghazālī, Br. Mus. MS. Add 25,023, f. 411^b :

کي رود عاقل سوي کشتي و بحر هر که شد دیوانه و مبهوت رفت
هیچ دانا شد بپاي خود بگور ؟ هیچ عاقل زنده در تابوت رفت ؟

Akbar's skill in riding elephants :⁵ "the elephant-overthrowing king is Jalālu'd-Dīn Muḥammad Akbar who bestows elephant-loads of silver on his poets" (Kāhī) :

شاه فیل افکن جلال الدین محمد اکبر است آنکه بخشد فیل زرین شاعران خویش را

Nūr Jahān's skill in shooting tigers :⁶ "Nūr Jahān is the tiger-slaying lady, is the Tiger-Slayer's lady, i.e., wife or widow of Shīr Afgan :"

نور جهان گرچه بصورت زن است در صف مردان زن شیر افکن است

Shāh Jahān's cruise in a boat : "who ever saw the sun in a boat ?" (Qudsi) :⁷

بغیر از شهنشاه مالک رقاب بکشتي نه پیموده بحر آفتاب

1. *Pādshāh Nāmāh* of 'Abdu'l-Hamīd Lahori, Vol. I, pt. I, p. 215.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 459.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 464.

4. This applies only to the Persians of the hinterland, for the Persians of the Gulf were expert mariners who sailed as far as China. See my *Persian Navigation*.

5. "His Majesty will put his foot on the tusks and mount the elephants." *Ā'in*, I, p. 131.

6. Once she killed 4 tigers, two with one ball each and the other two with two bullets without missing. *Tuzuk*, p. 186 ; also *Ā'in*, I, p. 525.

7. *Dīwān-i-Qudsi*, Bankipore MS., No. 684, f. 124^b.

Shāh Jahān's joy-ride on a white elephant in 1038 A.H. : "when he mounted the white elephant, the sun showed itself as it were over the white streaks of dawn" (Kalīm) :¹

برفیل سپیدت که مبیناد گزند
شد شیفته هر کس که نگاهی افگند
چون شاه جهان بر او برآمد گوئی
خورشید شد از سپیده صبح بلند

Prince Awrangzīb's cool courage during an Elephant Combat in 1042 A.H. when he was only 14 years of age : "when he found that his horse was unequal to the combat, he jumped on the ground and drew his sword : Afrāsiyāb would have melted with terror if at this age he had seen a raging elephant" (Kalīm) :

چو در اسب سامان جولان ندید
چو شهبازی از خانه زین پرید
هما ندم که بر خاک پا را فشرد
روان دست جرأت بشمشیر برد
درین سن اگر بودی افراسیاب
همی گشتی از دیدن فیل آب

Shāh Jahān's coronation in 1044 on the Peacock Throne "blazing like a lamp inextinguishable by water or any gust of wind" (Kalīm) :

توان ز آتش یاقوت آن چراغ افروخت
که نه ز باد رسد آفتش نه ز آب زوال

Shāh Jahān's conquest of the forts in the Deccan in 1045 : "he took in one year forty forts, not one of which could others have taken in forty years" (Kalīm) :²

چل قلعه بیک سال گرفتی که یکیش
شاهان نتوانند بچل سال گرفت

the lofty Dawlatābād fort "whose shadow has slapped the sky, blue in the face" (Qudsī) :

فلک را رخ از رفعت پایه اش
کبود است از سیلی سایه اش

the accident to Princess Jahān Ārā when her dress caught fire : "by contacting her dress, fire has acquired such dignity that angels may well make their rosaries of sparks" (Kalīm) :

تا کرده شعله کسب شرافت ز دامت
زیبدا اگر فرشته کند سبحة از شرار

and the gorgeous weighing-in ceremonies of Shāh Jahān "whose true equipoise could either be a mirror (so Mīr Yahyā) or his double (so Mīān Mīr) put in the opposite pan :

همسنگ تو در جهان نه بندد صورت
آئینه مگر نهند در میزانت

چیزی که برابری تواند کردن
در پله میزان تو عدل تو بود

are amongst the other interesting topics discussed by court-poets.

One duty of the court-poet, therefore, was to record social and political events. Another was to justify the abnormal acts of the King. When on the 5th Sha'bān, 987 A.H., Akbar alighted at the distance of ten miles from Ajmere and went on foot

1. *Padshāh Nāmāh*, Vol. I, pt. I, p. 268.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pt. II, p. 181.

to the tomb of the saint Mu'īnu'd-Dīn Chishtī : " if the King goes on foot there is nothing undignified about it," said Fayḍī, " on the chessboard also the King moves on foot. "1

در عرصه این جهان عجب نیست
گر شاه پیاده پا نهاده
رسمی ست که در بساط شطرنج
شه نیز رود ره پیاده

A third was to be with his sovereign through thick and thin, protect his honour and wash the dark stains on his character. How Fayḍī and Kalīm safeguarded the honour of Akbar and Shāh Jahān respectively are world-famous repartees but they do not lose their value by repetition.

An ambassador from Īrān came to Akbar's court, presented his credentials, and then read out in open darbār the following quatrain sent by Shāh 'Abbās the Great of Persia :

زنگی بسپاه و خیل و لشکر نازد
رومی بسنان و تیغ و خنجر نازد
اکبر بخزینه پر از زر نازد
عباس بذوالفقار حیدر نازد

The Ethiopian is proud of his African guards ; the Turk, of his Turkish spears ; Akbar, of his vaults full of gold ; but 'Abbās, of 'Alī's sword, *Dhu'l-fiqār*.

Akbar glanced at Fayḍī who replied extemporaneously :

Elysium is proud of its waters of Lethe ; the sea, of its pearls ; the sky, of its stars ; 'Abbās, of 'Alī's sword, *Dhu'l-fiqār* ; but the two worlds are proud of their Akbar in 'Allāhu Akbar'.

فرویدس بسلسبیل و کوثر نازد
دریا بگهر فلک باختر نازد
عباس بذوالفقار حیدر نازد
کونین بذات پاک اکبر نازد

The Sultān of Turkey reproached Shāh Jahān with arrogance in calling himself Shāh Jahān 'King of the world' when he was only 'King of India.' Kalīm put the Emperor in good cheer by replying that since Hind (India) and Jahān (world) are, numerically, identical, the right of India's King to be called 'King of the world' needed no additional argument :2

هند و جهان ز روی عدد هر دو چون یکی ست
شه را خطاب شاه جهانی مبرهن است

The most exacting duty of any courtier is to defend the indefensible. I have discovered two efforts of this kind, one by Fayḍī and the other a really brilliant Machiavellian achievement by Qudsi.

Applauding Akbar's worshipping of the sun, Fayḍī says : " Behold the equitable distribution of gifts by Fate ! Alexander had a mirror ; and Akbar has the sun. The former only saw himself in the mirror ; the latter sees God in the sun."

قسمت نگر که درخور هر جوهری عطاست
آئینه با سکندر و با اکبر آفتاب
او میکند معاینه خود در آئینه
این میکند مشاهده حق در آفتاب

1. Fayḍī's *diwān*, India Office MS., No. 3155, f. 279a.

2. *Kulliyāt-i-Kalīm*, Hyderabad State Library MS., No. 1225, f. 28a.

Qudsī's task, however, was far more arduous. When he began writing his *Zafar-Nāmah*, a history of *Shāh Jahān's* exploits in verse, which now exists only in two rare MSS. in the British Museum and the Bankipore Library, he was confronted with a dark blot on *Shāh Jahān's* character—the murder of five princes, namely two nephews, *Bulāqī* and *Garshāsp*, sons of *Khusraw*; two cousins, *Hūshang* and *Ṭahmūrath*, sons of *Dānyāl*; and one half-brother, *Shahryār*, son of *Jahāngīr*. *Shāh Jahān* may have begun his brilliant reign with a dark deed of violence; but Qudsī was not prepared to make the hero of his *Zafar-Nāmah*, a villain. That the King can do no wrong everyone knew; but it was reserved for Qudsī to demonstrate what *Shāh Jahān* himself did not know that the King had done no wrong.

He who knows virtue and vice,
knows that intriguers ruin the
country.

عیان است بر واقف خیر و شر که ویران شود ملک از رخنه گر

By distrust, the country is ruined;
'tis best to pluck from the roots
the sapling of mischief.

شود ملک ویران ز نا اعتماد ز بن کنده بهتر نهال فساد

The heads of political intriguers
should be under the earth and
the body-politic cleansed of all
impurities.

سر مفسد ملک در خاک به ز اخلاط فاسد بدن پاک به

Not all that grows from the body
has to be preserved: toe-nails
and finger-nails have to be
paired.

ز تن هر چه روید نباشد بجای بود چیدن ناخن از دست و پای

Will the tree of desire yield good
fruit if it is not pruned of its
superfluous boughs?

نکو کی دهد میوه نخل مراد نبرند اگر شاخ و برگ زیاد

With a double-edged sword 'tis
best to strike off that head
which is the source of dynastic
strife.

به تیغ دو سر آن سر افکنده به که در کار ملک افتد از وی گره

To-day the eaglet emerges from
the egg; and tomorrow it
begins to prey.

چو شاهین زد امروز از بیضه سر کند رغبت صید روزی دگر

Bulāqī, *Ṭahmūrath*, *Shahryār*;
and with the three of them,
Hūshang and *Garshāsp*

بلاقی و طهمورث و شهریار بان هر سه هوشنگ و گرشاسپ یار

Were at Lahore under the sur-
veillance of *Yamīnu'd-Dawlah*.

بلاهور بودند هر پنج شان یمین دوله افکنده در رنج شان

And when *Khidmat Parast Khān*
brought to Lahore the warrant
for their execution,

که در قتل شان خان خدمت پرست درآمد بلاهور فرمان بدست

How that statesman executed the
warrant—I know that you know.
Why say what he did?

در اجرای فرمان سگالنده مرد چه دانم که دانی؟ چگویم چه کرد؟

'Tis obvious to every man of common sense that Kingship knows no kinship ;

And no thinker can ever accept a partner for God or the monarch.

If thou dost admit that the King is the "Shadow of God on earth," it follows that the One God cannot cast two shadows.

The King's mind was relieved of anxiety (for the public weal) when the thicket was purged of its tiger-cubs.

که در پادشاهی نشاید سهم

بلی نیست پنهان ز طبع سلیم

شریک جهان چون شریک خدا

بنزد خرد و نباشد روا

نباشد یکی را دو سایه ز پی

چه گوئی تو شد پادشه ظل حی

که از زاده شیر شد بیشه پاک

شدش لوح خاطر ز اندیشه پاک

PATRONAGE OF COURT-POETRY

The evidence of the royal donors and their contemporary annalists all goes to show that Humāyūn, Akbar, Jahāngir and Shāh Jahān were extremely liberal in their patronage of poetry. Some poets became commanders of 5000, like Ghaznawī d. 983 A.H., Zayn Khān d. 1010, Ja'far d. 1021, and Ulfatī d. 1022 ; others received jāgīrs like Ghazālī d. 980, Faydī d. 1004 and Hayātī died after 1024; others again received cash grants for isolated odes. For example, Akbar paid Rs. 2,000 to Haydarī, d. 1002:¹ Rs. 5,000 to Kāhī d. 988 and Rs. 10,000 to Marwī d. c. 979. Jahāngir paid Rs. 1,000 to Nazirī d. 1022, and Rs. 5,000 to Sa'idā-i-Gilānī in 1027. Shāh Jahān gave Rs. 5,000 to Sa'idā in 1042,² Rs. 2,000 to Dānish in 1066,³ and to the poet Qudsī d. 1056 he gave Rs. 2,000 in 1042,⁴ Rs. 5,500 in 1045,⁵ 100 gold mohurs in 1049⁶ and Rs. 2,000 in 1054.⁷ Similarly the poet Kalīm received from Shāh Jahān Rs. 5,500 in 1044,⁸ Rs. 1,000 in 1049 and 200 gold mohurs⁹ and again 200 gold mohurs¹⁰ in 1055. But curiously though they praise the patron's liberality : for example, Faydī says that 'Abdu'r-Rahīm Khān Khānān¹¹ paid the poets in advance, before listening to their odes :

داشت چون اعتماد بر شعرا صله پیش از مدیح گفتن داد

not a poet ever mentions what he actually received from his patron ; and even the poets who received titles and jāgīrs are always complaining that they were underpaid and undervalued.

1. *Muntakhab*, text III, p. 218.

2. *Pādshāh-Nāmah* of 'Abdu'l-Hamīd Lahori, Vol. I, pt. I, p. 493.

3. *Shāh Jahān-Nāmah* of Šālih Kanbu, Vol. III, p. 209.

4. *Pādshāh-Nāmah*, Vol. I, pt. I, p. 444.

5. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pt. II, p. 142.

6. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 153.

7. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 400.

8. *Pādshāh-Nāmah* of 'Abdu'l-Hamīd Lahori, Vol. I, pt. II, pp. 83-84.

9. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 420.

10. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 468.

11. For his liberality see p. 49, n. 2.

Mullā Nūru'd-Dīn Tar Khān held a jāgīr in Sind and received from Humāyūn the title of Tar Khān. This was a Mughal title which was hereditary for nine generations and carried with it extraordinary privileges. The poet says, however, that he had nothing but waste lands with his title of Khān and on becoming Tar Khān, since "tar" means "moist," what little moisture there was in those lands seemed to evaporate:¹

I have a complaint to make
before the wise and perfect
king against the Tarkhānate.

ز ترخانی هم او را شکوه هست بنزد خسرو دانای کامل

For if 'tar,' 'moist,' be sub-
tracted from the Tarkhānate,
there remains but the dry
khānate and the honorary
Khān.

که غیر از خان خشکی مینماید ز ترخانی تری گردد چو زایل

Hydarī says that Akbar's donation of Rs. 2,000 is difficult to get and even more difficult not to get;²

سیم و زر انعام کردی لیک از خازن مرا هم گرفتن مشکل و هم ناگرفتن مشکل است

while Ghazālī, the poet-laureate complains in his unique *dīwān*, Br. Mus. MS. Add 25,023, f. 47^b that he was better off when he was not in Akbar's service, for he has been deprived of half his jāgīr and the old horse in his stable is a liability.

O King since nearly three years
it is the talk of every Turk and
Persian,

کین سخن ذکر ترک و تاجیک است

پادشاه سه سال نزدیک است

That Ghazālī has received en-
couragement and patronage
from Akbar, champion of
Islam.

یافت دلداري و سرافرازي

که غزالی ز اکبر غازي

When the news reached my
friends and relatives, greed
drew them here.

طمع این سوکشید ایشان را

شد خبر دوستان و خویشان را

Hitherto my condition was not
bad; but my present state has
brought me humiliation.

گشت این موجب خجالت من

پیش ازین بد نبود حالت من

Especially since the lofty dome of
the sky has cut off my supply
of water from above.

آب ما را برید از بالا

خاصه وقتی که گنبد والا

Vexation has annexed the realm
of my heart: one-half of my
jāgīr has been reduced.

نیمی از جایگیر من کم شد

ملک دل غصه را مسلم شد

Either good fortune has deserted
me, or else some malicious
fellow has been spreading a
tale.

یا خبثی حکایتی گفته

یا مرا چشم بخت شد خفته

1. Badā'ūnī's *Muntakhab*, text, Vol. III, pp. 198-199.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 218.

- Or the sportive sky has been playing a trick or the King has been trifling with me. یا زد این نقش چرخ عیش نورد یا شهنشه بمن مطایبه کرد
- All I had in cash and kind is exhausted; my servant has become my master, your obedient servant has become a slave. نقد و جنسی که بود گشت تمام چا کرم خواجه گشت بنده غلام
- An old woollen jacket is my (Kashmīrī) shawl; an earthenware jug is my Chinese bowl. در برم صوف کهنه شالی شد ظرف فغفوریم سفالی شد
- I am left with a dilapidated pony which needs my careful nursing. ز آنچه ماند است اسپکی دارم که بتیار او گرفتارم
- Call it not a horse; it is worse than an ass, for an ass is more swift of speed. اسپ نامش منه که کم ز خراست خرکی خود ازودونده تر است
- Its back is bent like a bow and its protruding guts are the bow-strings. چون کبان شکسته پشت فرود روده او بر آن کبان زه رود
- That bow can never be drawn: it throws the arrow before the archer's feet. آن کبان هر دم از کشیدن پاک تیر را پیش پا فگنده بخاک
- That pony is always prostrating itself with humility; and (to avoid being outdone in manners by an animal) I have also to come down on my knees. از تواضع بسجده آمد او من هم از مردمی زده زانو
- 'Tis marvellous how without closing its lips, the horse kisses the earth. طرفه این کش بهم نیامده لب بوسها داد بر زمین ادب
- Call it not a horse: it is a stable of grief and sorrow; a dry stick like the horse (knight) on a chessboard. نه که اسپ طویله غم و رنج خشک چوبی چو اسپک شطرنج
- When Mānī (Manes) painted a lean horse, he drew his inspiration from that horse. اسپ لاغر که زد رقم مانی گشته او را بلاغری ثانی
- A spider it is, imprisoned in the web of greed—grown old by worrying constantly over oats and straw. عنکبوتی بتار حرص اسیر در غم گاه و فکر جو شده پیر
- Before the universe had emerged from non-existence, a floral rein had been flung on that pony's head. از عدم سر نکرده عالم پیش او گل افسار داشت بر سر خویش
- The farrier of the sun had shod its shoe before it had put bells on the neck of the celestial horse. نعلش آن روز بست فارس مهر که جلاجل نداشت خنگ سپهر

It bears a hundred scars of grief—and also the branding-mark of King Bahrām Gūr (d. 438 A.D.).

Now and then I mount it with an effort—like a fly sitting on a running sore.

It never moves its legs : even if it is killed, it will not stir under the whip.

If so, how can I be happy ? How can I bear the King company?

O King, save me from that horse : give me one of thy special chargers—

Swift of foot, rushing like the North wind and the zephyr, over seas and mountains ;

So that in the royal cavalcade I may not lag behind any horseman.

Since thou dost fulfil desires and unravel knots, pass orders also for the grant of a jāgīr.

گرچه صد داغ درد و غم دارد داغ بهرام گور هم دارد

من بر او گه گهی نشسته بزور چون مگس بر جراحت ناسور

هرگز دست و پا نمی جنبد تو بگش او ز جان نمی جنبد

ار چنین است چون توان آسود همه شاه چون توانم بود

پادشاه ازو خلاصم ده یکی از توسن خاصم ده

بادمیری که از بحور و جبال بگذرد تیز چون صبا و شال

تا توان در مواکب شاهي کرد با هر که هست همراهي

چون توئی کام بخش و عقده کشاي حکم جاگیر هم کرم فرمائي

The complaints of Haydārī and Ghazālī are innocuous ; but Sayyidī of Garmsīr passes beyond complaint to impugning the administration of Akbar, and having served him and various Amīrs, rejects, from his retreat in Kābul, the theory of Mughal liberality (*Muntakhab*, text, III, p. 247) :

Though in the reign of the king of the world, nobody possesses anything but a draught of water and a patched garment,

Thanks a hundredfold to God, since poverty has become universal, there remains no envy among the people.

And again : " Thy generosity was not equivalent to my poetry : keep thy generosity and return my poetry."¹

نه در برابر شعر من این عطاي تو بود عطاي خویش نگه دار و شعر من بفرست

The condemnation is singular but not unilateral : there are two rare instances of court-poets, namely Sanjar d. 1021² and Fanā'ī Chaghtā'ī, who were condemned and for a time even imprisoned by Akbar. Shāh Fanā'ī Chaghtā'ī became commander of 1000, served in the conquest of Mālwa and received the title of Khān but had later on

1. Badā'ūnī's *Muntakhabu't-Tawārīkh*, text, Vol. III, p. 248.

2. " For some crime, ' to mention which is not proper, ' Akbar imprisoned him. " See *Ā'in*, I, p. 595, n. 3.

to be degraded. Once he said : " Nobody has excelled me in three shīns, shamshīr (sword), shī'r (poetry) and shaṭranj (chess)." Akbar at once replied : " the same might be said of two other shīns—shayṭānī (devilry) and shaṭṭāhī (effrontery)."¹

All poets, therefore, were not paragons of virtue ; and if occasionally, a poet was discontented with the Mughal court, Mughal patronage is not to be questioned, for though we know the King's liberality, the poet's rapacity we do not know. " The greedy fellow is like unto an oyster, " says Faydī, " which though drowned in a sea of water will nevertheless open its mouth to suck a single drop of water from the April shower."²

غرق دریا ست صدف لیک ز بسیاری حرص
بهر یک قطره نیشان دهنش باز شود

When Bayram Khān had paid Hāshim of Qandahār, sixty thousand tankahs, equivalent to three thousand rupees, for a ghazal, " is this enough ? " asked Bayram. " Sixty is too little, " replied the greedy poet.³

1. *Muntakhab*, text, III, p. 296 ; also *Ā'in*, I, p. 426.

2. *Dīwān-i-Faydī*, India Office MS., No. 3155, f. 281b.

3. *Muntakhab*, text, II, p. 36.

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ODES FOR WHICH THE POETS WERE WEIGHED IN SILVER

IT is incredible what Indian enthusiasts can believe. Because the non-contemporary *Ma'āthir-i-Umarā* must be right, *Nazīrī* receives from *Shibli*¹ what he never received from the *Khān Khānān* a lakh of rupees;² and because Akbar's *tankah* must mean a silver rupee, and *Jahāngīr* and *Shāh Jahān*'s *zar* must mean gold, *Nazīrī*, *Zuhūrī*, *Hayātī*, *Sa'idā*, *Kalīm* and *Qudsī* receive from Professor *Ghanī*³ what they never received from the Mughal Emperors or the rulers of the Deccan, their body-weight of gold, or elephant-loads of gold and silver, or 30,000 gold mohurs or even all the movable and immovable property of a Mughal aristocrat. Everyone knows, however, that non-contemporary works contain much ballast; and as for the *tankah*, my conclusion was reached much earlier by the *Khizānah-i-Āmirah*, Neval Kishore edition, p. 390 :

"The *tankah* is a double copper coin which is still in circulation : one rupee is equal to twenty *tankahs*; and therefore 200,000 *tankahs* are equal to Rs. 10,000."

مراد از تنکه همین جفت پول مس باشد که بالفعل در زمان ما رائج است - یک روپيه به بیست تنکه میارزد - باین حساب دو لک تنکه ده هزار روپيه میشود -

And as for *zar* there are three passages in the contemporary *Pādshāh-Nāmah* of the court-annalist, 'Abdu'l-Hamīd Lahori which prove conclusively that *zar* was silver not gold : the word for gold being "*zar-i-surkh* :

1. In 1042/1633 *Sa'idā-i-Gilānī* was weighed against *zar* and the value thereof amounting to Rs. 5,000 was given to him by order of *Shāh Jahān* (Vol. I, pt. I, p. 493) :

سعیدای گیلانی، مخاطب به بیدل خان، این ماجرای مرد آزما در سلک نظم کشیده، بعرض مقدس رسانید بامر خاقانی بزر سنجیده آمد و مبلغ همسنگش که پنج هزار روپيه بود باو انعام شد -

2. In 1044/March 1635 *Abū Tālib Kalīm* was weighed against *zar* and the value thereof amounting to Rs. 5,500 was given to him by order of *Shāh Jahān* (Vol. I, pt. II, pp. 83-84) :

طالب کلیم، چون قصیده رنگین بعرض اقدس رسانید، بحکم شهنشاه دانش پرور بزر سنجیده آمد و بانعام مبلغ همسنگ که پنج هزار و پانصد روپيه بود کامیاب گشت -

1. *Sh'ir-i'l 'Ajam*, Vol. III, p. 143.

2. A list of 106 panegyrists and protégés of 'Abdu'r-Rahīm *Khān Khānān* is given in the third volume of the *Ma'āthir-i-Rahīmī* (Calcutta ed.) composed in 1025 A.H., which alleges that the *Khān Khānān* gave Rs. 10,000 and Rs. 12,000 to *Naw'ī* (p. 637) and *Shakībī* (p. 69) respectively for their *Sāqī-Nāmahs*; Rs. 12,000 to *Anīsī* on the occasion of his marriage in Lahore (p. 520) and a like amount to *Maḥwī* (p. 802), died 1016, and also to *Taqī'ī-Shushtarī* (p. 681) who had expressed a desire to see what sort of a pile such a sum could make; Rs. 50,000 to *Haydar Mu'ammā'ī* (p. 622); Rs. 80,000 to *Shakībī* (p. 69), died 1023, for the journey to Mecca; and to others, for example, 'Urfī (p. 297) such sums as beggar description. But before these figures are accepted, it should be remembered that "a great portion of the *Ma'āthir-i-Rahīmī* is devoted to an ample detail of his patron, the *Khān Khānān* : it is written under such circumstances, in so fulsome a strain of eulogy, that it is difficult to know what faith to put in it." Sir H. Elliot, *History of India*, Vol. VI, p. 237.

3. *Humāyūn*, p. 150, footnote.

3. In 1045, the 16th of *Shawwāl*, Hājī Muḥammad Jān-i-Qudsī was weighed against zar and the value thereof amounting to Rs. 5,500 was given to him by order of Shāh Jāhān (Vol. I, pt. II, p. 142):

حاجي محمد جان قدسي را در جلدوي قصيده که بمدح پادشاه فلک پایگاه محلي ساخته بود بزر بر کشيده مبلغ وزن را که پنج هزار و پانصد روپيه شد باو مرحمت نمودند -

In those days one tola of gold was equal to Rs. 14 (*Pādshāh-Nāmah* of 'Abdu'l-Hamīd Lahori, Vol. I, pt. II, p. 79): "one hundred thousand tolas of gold, i.e., 250,000 mithqāls are worth 14 hundred thousand rupees:"

یک لک توله طلا که دو صد و پنجاه هزار مثقال است و مبلغ چهار ده لک روپيه قيمت آن -

and if zar had been gold, the poets would have received fourteen times 5,000 or 5,500 rupees.

Obviously, therefore, when Jahāngīr says that he had Sa'idā weighed against zar in 1027 A.H. (*Tuzuk-i-Jahāngīrī*, 'Alīgarh ed. p. 240):

بصله این قصيده حکم فرمودم که سعیدا را بزر وزن کنند -

that zar was also silver. Furthermore, as Sa'idā and Kalīm received Rs. 5,000 or Rs. 5,500 when they were actually weighed against silver, the poets Kāhī and Marwī who received from Akbar Rs. 5,000 and Rs. 10,000 respectively must be deemed to have been potentially weighed in silver. Finally, if material rewards are any indication of the quality of verse, then six super-poems of the Mughal period for which their composers were potentially or actually weighed against silver, should have come down to us. I shall now deal with those six neglected prize-poems of the Mughal period.

Writing only 14 years after Qāsim-i-Kāhī's death which took place in 988 A.H. the *Haft Iqlīm* says that for an ode in which the word 'fil'—elephant—occurred in every couplet, Kāhī received one lakh of tankahs, i.e., Rs. 5,000 (India Office MS., No. 49, f. 502^b):

بواسطه قصيده لازم فيلي که گفته بود یک لک تنکه صله گرفت -

Abu'l-Faḍl cites three verses of that poem but I have found the entire ode in the unique *diwān* of Kāhī belonging to Prof. Mas'ūd Ḥasan Riḍwī of Lucknow:

Seeing that my beloved was interested in elephants, I have spent the cash of my life on the path of the elephant.

تا بفیلان میل دیدم دلستان خویش را

صرف راه فیل کردم نقد جان خویش را

On my head I throw dust like an elephant, wherever I go, if I do not see my elephant-driver on my head.

خاک بر سر میکنم چون فیل هر جا میرسم

گر نه بینم بر سر خود فیلان خویش را

So that my love may wax every moment, that elephant-driver drives his raging elephant very close to me.

دمبدم تا عشق من افزون شود آن فیلان

میدواند بر سرم فیل دمان خویش را

I want to trumpet like a mad elephant all the time so that I may disclose my hidden secret.

همچو فیل مست میخواهم خروشم هر زمان

آشکارا تا کنم راز نهان خویش را

Rather 'tis better to hide love ;
'tis best to bridle my tongue
like an elephant.

باز میگویم حدیث عشق پنهان خوشتر است
به که چون فیلان نگه دارم زبان خویش را

At the feet of the King's elephant
(bishop), Qāsim-i-Kāhī laid his
face (castle) and rolled up his
chess-board of life.

قاسم کاهی پیاپی فیل آن شه رخ نهاد
باخت آخر در بساطش خان و مان خویش را

The King who overthrows
elephants is Jalālu'd-Dīn
Muḥammad Akbar—he who
bestows golden elephants on
his poets.

شاه فیل افکن جلال الدین محمد اکبر است
آنکه بخشد فیل زرین شاعران خویش را

May the elephant of the sky be
under the hook of his authority
so that it may recognize its
master, the Lord of Conjunction.

باد فیل چرخ زیر چنگک فرمان او
تا شناسد خسرو صاحبقران خویش را

Induced by the reward given to Kāhī, the poet Ghazālī, d. 980 A.H., produced a poem contained in the unique copy of Ghazālī's dīwān in the British Museum, Add 25023 f. 50^a, wherein not only the elephant but also the hunting-leopard and lion occur in every hemistich :

Akbar, the champion, whose
elephant, cheetah and lion are
the elephant, cheetah and lion
selected by the sky.

اکبر غازی که فیل و چیته و شیر تو اند
چرخ ، فیل و چیته و شیری که کرد است انتخاب

I, Ghazālī, have written this poem
in honour of thy elephant,
cheetah and lion: to my
elephant, cheetah and lion who
can furnish a reply ?

بهر فیل و چیته و شیرت غزالی گفت شعر
کیست فیل و چیته و شیر مرا گوید جواب

But though Akbar was particularly fond of elephants and cheetahs and had made Ghazālī his first poet-laureate, the bloom of novelty had worn off and Ghazālī's tour de force evoked no material response.

The second prize-poem consists of 31 verses by Khawājah Husayn Marwī, quoted in Vol. II, pp. 120-123 of Badā'ūnī's Muntakhab. "He received 200,000 tankahs i.e., Rs. 10,000," says Badā'ūnī :

دولک تنکه نقد صله یافت -

All the first hemistichs of the ode give the date of Akbar's coronation, 963 A.H. and all the second hemistichs, the date of Jahāngīr's birth, 977 A.H. Sir Wolseley Haig says, footnote, p. 248, Vol. III, English translation of the Muntakhab, that 'this is not so ;' and Mr. Lowe says, note 1, p. 127, Vol. II of the Muntakhab that the verses are correct, only sometimes a *waw* or a *ye* must be struck out. Actually, however, the ode contains 25 mistakes, vitiating 25 hemistichs. By collating with the 15 couplets contained in the Akbar-Nāmah, p. 348, Vol. II, Calcutta ed., 1879, I was able to correct 8 mistakes ; one mistake proved incorrigible and for the remaining 16 I have suggested emendations.

- Praise be to God! For the sake of enhancing His Majesty's pomp and glory, a choice pearl has come ashore, from the ocean of justice. 963 لله الحمد از بی جاه و جلال شهریار
- From the nest of rank and bounty, a bird has alighted; from the pinnacle of grandeur and elegance a star has appeared. 977 گوهر مجد از محیط عدل آمد در کنار
- A rose like this was not displayed in the expanse of the garden: an anemone-bud like this did not blossom in the field of anemone. 963 گلبنی اینگونه ننمودند بر دور چمن
- The wet-nurse of the vernal cloud and the blessings of God have made the verdure (Jodh Bai) a companion of the rose (Salīm), the pearl (Jodh Bai) an associate of the jewel (Salīm). 1673 دایه ابر بهار از سهربانیهای فضل
- The sun says: "to set off the beauty of that baby who is like a bit of the moon, it would be appropriate if I were to make an ear-ring of Venus." 972 سبزه با گل همزبان، لولو بگوهر کرد یار
- The welcome birth (of the Prince) has increased the splendour of the King, for now he has a lustrous pearl (Salīm) to match the royal pearl (Jodh Bai). 963 Read دایه ابر بهار و سهربانیهای رب
- All hearts are happy for once more from the heaven of justice and equity, the world has revived as if by the vernal sun. 977 Read سبزه با گل همزبان، لولو بگوهر کرده یار
- Lo, the crescent hath come from the mansion of bounty, pomp and power: the sapling of the King's ardent soul has borne fruit. 979 از پی زیب جمال از زهره سازم گوشوار
- The King of the realm of fidelity; the monarch of the palace of purity; the candle of the assembly of the broken-hearted; the desire of the hearts of the hopeful. 977 Read از پی زی^۱ جمال از زهره سازم گوشوار
- The just, the perfect Muhammad Akbar, Lord of Conjunction; the illustrious monarch who pursues his desires successfully. 977 مقدم مولود می افزود زیب شه اگر
- Shad shad dila ke baz az ashan edl w dad 977 لؤلوی لالا فزودی زیب در شاهوار
- آن هلال برج قدر وجود و جاه آمد برون 977 باز دنیا زنده شد کز مهر ایام بهار
- و آن نهال آرزوی جان شاه آمد بهار 977 آن هلال برج قدر وجود و جاه آمد برون
- شاه اقلیم وفا، سلطان ایوان صفا 977 شاه اقلیم وفا، سلطان ایوان صفا
- شمع جمع بیدلان، کام دل امیدوار 977 شمع جمع بیدلان، کام دل امیدوار
- عادل کامل، محمد اکبر صاحبقران 977 عادل کامل، محمد اکبر صاحبقران
- پادشاه نامدار کام جوی و کامگار 977 پادشاه نامدار کام جوی و کامگار

1. زی means form. See Farhang-i-Anand Rāj.

Perfect, wise, able, the most just king in the world; supremely tolerant, talented, the nonpareil.

From his speech is understood the meaning of the ecstatic state; by his perfection, the edifice of religion and the world is supported.

The shadow of God's grace, worthy of the crown and seal; Defender of the Faith; the just pivot of the world.

With the onslaught of wrath sometimes he brings the word, "Quarter" on the tongue; sometimes by the tongue of the spear, he says, "Flee" to the enemy.

The fourth heaven is the censer of his assembly; the Arcturus, the lance-bearer of his cavalcade.

Wherever his victorious cavalcade passes, a world of people cry out: "Felicity" on the right hand, 'Prosperity' on the left.

The power of his pen which exercises authority even over flowing waters makes (the record of man) black or white, night and day.

Like the creative power of the Eternal God, O sun of the country and religion, thou makest eminence eminent and art the Shadow of God.

O prince of the lofty standard, with a heart as large as the universe; Saturn-throned; thou art an exalted ruler, just and of noble descent.

Lord of the wealth of the world; king of land and sea; thou art kind to friends (being a living) example of beneficence.

عادل اعلي، عاقل، بي عدیل روزگار

وز کمال او بنای دین و دنیا استوار

بادشاه دین پناه آن عادل عالم مدار

با عدو گه از زبان رمح گوید الفرار

مؤکب وی را سهاک راسخ آمد نیزه دار

یمن گویند از یمن، یا یسر دانند از یسار

بر سپیدی یا سیاهی می رود لیل و نهار

پایه افزای معالی سایه پروردگار

والی والا مآبی عادل عالی تبار

والی والا مآبی عادل عالی تبار

با محبان مهربانی، از کریمان یادگار

کامل دانای قابل، عادل شاهان بدهر

از کلام او بیان حال معنی مستفاد

سایه لطف اله، آن لایق تاج و نگین

بر زبان گه از نجوم قهر آرد

بر زبان گه از هجوم قهر آرد ای امان

مجلس وی را سماء چارمین دان عود سوز

مؤکب منصور وی ز آنجا که راند عالمی

مؤکب منصور وی ز آنجا که راند، عالمی

حکم آن کلکی که دارد حکم بر آب روان

ای چو صنع لایزالی آفتاب ملک و دین

والی والا علم عالم دل و کیوان سریر

مالک مال جهان ای پادشاه بحر و بر

963

شاه صبح عدل و دادی ماه شام جاه و گاه برق گاه عزم و جزمی کوه گاه بردبار
The sun of the dawn of truth and justice; the moon of the evening of pomp and dignity; (a flash of) lightning in taking decisions; a mountain in tolerance.

977

Thou art a mine of justice; with benevolence, a fountain of grace and liberality; precious, magnanimous, chaste champion of religion.

معدن عدلی و احسان، منبع لطف و کرم 951
با بها و باذل و دین پرور و پرهیزگار 1697

Read معدن از عدلی - با احسان منبع از لطف و کرم 963

Read با بها و با دل و دین پرور پرهیزگار 977

O protector of the Prophet's religion, O destroyer of evil traditions; thou art a ruler of lofty standard; a mine of bounty; a mountain in dignity.

حامی دین نبی ای ماحی آثار بد

والی والا علم، کان کرم، کوه وقار 894

Read والیائی عالی علم، کان کرم، کوه وقار 977

Luminary of the mansion of existence; pearl of the sea of bounty; a royal hunting falcon soaring with an elevated heart!

نیر برج وجودی، گوهر دریای جود

At thy bounty, how can lustre remain to the blushing cloud? In thy presence, "bounty" is not applicable to the vernal cloud.

از هوای اوج دلها شاه باز و جان شکار

کی بحدوت ماند آبی از حیا پیش سحاب

با وجودت می نزدیک جود از ابر بهار

O king, I have brought a string of fine pearls: as the gift is precious, seek it and hear it.

پادشاهها سلک لولوی نفیس آورده ام

هدیه کان آمد گرامی باز جوی و گوشدار

None can bring a better gift than this: whoever has a better gift, tell him to come; tell him to bring the thing he has.

کس نیارد هدیه زین به اگر دارد کسی

هر که دارد گویا چیزی که دارد گو بیار

One by one the couplets of Marwī are so faultless that whichever verse thou triest thou wilt attain thy objective twice.

یک یک اشعار مروی بسکه بی عیب آمده 1121

هر یکی جوئی ز وی مقصود دریایی دو بار 967

Read یک یک ابیات مروی بسکه بی عیب آمده 963

Read هر یکی جوئی ز وی مقصودی دریایی دو بار 977

The first hemistich thereof gives the date of the king's coronation; from the second, obtain the (date of) birth of the darling of the world.

مصرع اول ز وی سال جلوس پادشاه از دویم مولود نور دیده عالم برآر

So long as the days of the months make up the year—and the day, month and year constitute the date,

تا بود باقی حساب روزهای ماه سال

و آن حساب از سال و ماه و روز دوران پایدار

May our king and also the prince live—for countless days and innumerable years!

شاه ما پاینده باد و باقی آن شاهزاده هم

روزهای بی حساب و سالهای بیشمار 976 ! sic

The last hemistich is short by one year. "A difference of one or two years," says Abu'l-Faḍl, "is permissible in chronograms on buildings, not on persons' births and deaths." However, Rs. 10,000 paid to Marwī induced the poet Šīrafī to produce a similar ode; but it was too late: "the early bird had caught the worm," says Badā'ūnī.

The third prize-poem is an ode by Sa'idā-i-Gilānī in honour of Jahāngīr and Prince Khurram Shāh Jahān. Only six verses quoted by Jahāngīr in the *Tuzuk* ('Aligarh ed., p. 240) have survived:

The nine heavens are an exemplar
of thy threshold: aged Time
hath become young in thy
reign.

ای نه فلک نمونه از آستان تو دوران پیرگشته جوان در زمان تو

Like the sun, thy heart bestows
largess without a cause: all
lives are meant to be a sacrifice
for thy gracious heart.

بخشد دل توفیض و نجوید سبب چو مهر جانها همه فدای دل مهربان تو

Heaven is a green orange from
the garden of thy power,
suspended by thy gardener in
the air.

از باغ قدرت است فلک یک ترنج سبز انداخته بروی هوا باغبان تو

By God, of what substance art
thou made, (O king), since
from all eternity the souls of
the saints have been deriving
their lustre from thy sparkling
life?

یار بچه گوهری تو که افروخت در ازل جانهای قدسیان همه از نور جان تو

O king of the age, may the
world function according to thy
desire—with thy Shāh Jahān
flourishing (Khurram) under
thy shadow.

بادا جهان بکام تو ای پادشاه عهد در سایه تو خرم شاه جهان تو

O Shadow of God on earth, the
world hath been illumined
by thee, for thou art light (Nūr),
and may the light of God
always be thy canopy!

ای سایه خدا ز تو پر نور شد جهان بادا همیشه نور خدا سایبان تو

Notice, in the concluding hemistichs, the double pun on Shāh Jahān's name which was Khurram, and Jahāngīr's name which was Nūru'd-Dīn. Jahāngīr was so pleased that he had Sa'idā weighed in silver on the 14th Shahrīwar, 1027/26; August, 1618: such an honour had never been conferred before and it was Sa'idā's first performance!

In 1042/May, 1633 Sa'idā beat the world's record when he was re-weighed against silver by order of Shāh Jahān for an ode depicting the cool courage of Prince Awrang-zīb during an Elephant Combat. The Prince, less than 14 years of age, was charged by an infuriated elephant: he struck the animal on the forehead with his spear and when his horse was attacked, he leaped down from the saddle and again faced the animal. Just then aid arrived and the Prince was saved. Unfortunately not a single line of Sa'idā's ode has survived: there are poets who do not receive honours but their works survive; Sa'idā received top-honours but his works have perished.

The fifth prize-poem is of 63 couplets by Kalīm on Shāh Jahān's second coronation on the Peacock Throne.¹ For this ode, Kalīm received Rs. 5,500. Rs. 5,500 for 63 verses, i.e., 6 gold pieces per couplet!² And even so there are not six men in the world to-day who know that these 63 verses do exist. Why regret that the gems of the Mughal period are lost when this is our indifference to the gems that remain?

Auspicious is the advent of New Year's day synchronizing with the Eid of Ramaḍān (first Shawwāl): what flowers of joy have been showered on the (new) year and the (new) month!

At the festival of joy, there are two cups in the hands of the cup-bearer: aye, two crescent moons are necessary to enjoy the synchronism of the two Eids.

In the eyes of the people of the capital, a third Eid is the dust of the cavalcade of Shāh Jahān, who is a world of glory.

Nawrūz receives 'exaltation' on such an Eid when the King takes his seat on the throne of absolute monarchy.

In praise of his throne, studded with gems, I am producing pearls of speech: God grant (him) Noah's length of life and continuity of speech (to me).

Rubies from thousands of Ceylons and hundreds of Badakhshāns did the throne obtain as a gift ere it unveiled its beauty.

The light of its rubies mingling with the lustre of diamonds is like the reflection of illuminations in crystal water.

Its antique emeralds are greener than fresh grass: who considers a combination of opposites impossible?

The gold of the throne would have melted with the fire of its rubies—were it not for the water of its lustrous pearls!

1. Kulliyāt-i-Kalīm, Hyderabad State Library MS., No. 1225, f. 13^a-15^a.

2. Rs. 87 per couplet; and as the value of gold then was Rs. 14 per tola, therefore six tolas of gold or six gold pieces per couplet.

توان ز آتش یاقوت آن چراغ افروخت که نه ز باد رسد آتش نه ز آب زوال
With the fire of its rubies can be¹ lighted a lamp, inextinguishable
by water or any gust of wind.

بها ندارد و دیگر هر آنچه خواهی هست ز شان و شوکت و فرو شکوه و حسن و جمال
(The throne) hath no price but whatever else thou desirest it has: dignity, majesty, glory, grandeur, grace and beauty.

There remains the sixth prize-poem of Qudsi which cannot be traced, being indistinguishably lost in his own *dīwān*. This is curious, because a poem for which the poet was weighed against silver should have stood out as a sapphire among pebbles. The *dīwān*, however, contains no such ode; and the conclusion is obvious: Qudsi was weighed against silver in 1045 for an earlier performance.

Shāh Jahān was a perfect artist who never had the same poet weighed twice against silver, nor two or more poets weighed against silver on the same occasion. Consequently, when Shāh Jahān took his seat on the Peacock Throne on the 12th March, 1635/1044 A.H. and all the three great poets of his court, Kalīm, Sa'idā and Qudsi produced their masterpieces befitting that brilliant occasion, only Abū Ṭālib Kalīm was weighed against silver, not because he was the poet-laureate or because his performance was superior to that of his contemporaries, but because (a) Sa'idā had already been weighed against silver in 1042 A.H., and (b) Hājī Muḥammad Jān-i-Qudsi, in so far as twenty of his verses had been inscribed inside the Peacock Throne, had, *ipso facto*, been suitably rewarded. Shāh Jahān felt, however, that Qudsi had not been materially compensated and so he was weighed against silver in 1045 for his performance of 1044. To proceed now to those verses which formed part of the Peacock Throne.

ENAMELLED VERSES OF THE PEACOCK THRONE

In 1037 A.H., shortly after his accession to the throne, Shāh Jahān selected jewels worth 86 lakhs of rupees and with them and a lakh of tolas of pure gold, worth 14 lakhs of rupees, he commanded Sa'idā-i-Gilānī to construct the Peacock Throne. Seven years later, in 1044 A.H., the throne was ready: it was $3\frac{1}{4}$ yards long, $2\frac{1}{2}$ yards broad and 5 yards high, with two peacocks with upraised tails, carrying a ruby each in their beaks, on the quadrangular-shaped canopy of the throne. A jewelled tree separated the peacocks which faced each other; and 108 rubies and 116 emeralds, whose weight varied respectively from 100 to 200 carats and from 30 to 60 carats each, were studded on the outside of the throne. Twelve pillars of emerald surrounded with rows of round and lustrous pearls weighing 6 to 10 carats each, supported the throne; and three jewelled steps led up to the Emperor's seat whereon glittered a historical ruby worth a lakh of rupees, sent to Jahāngīr by Shāh 'Abbās the Great of Persia. And inside this throne, inscribed in enamel by order of Shāh Jahān, were the following twenty verses of Qudsi's (*Pādshāh-Nāmah* of 'Abdu'l-Ḥamīd Lahori, Vol. I, pt. II, pp. 80-81):

بامر خاقانی این مثنوی حاجی محمد جان قدسی که ختمش بر تاریخ است بمینای سبز درون تخت کتابه نمودند -

1. Variant آب زلال.

- Hail the auspicious throne of the King completed by the grace of God! زهی فرخنده تخت پادشاهی که شد سامان بتائید الهی
- For its construction, Heaven melted, first of all, the gold of the sun. فلک روزی که میکردش مکمل زر خورشید را بگداخت اول
- By the Emperor's order, the blue of the sky went to the enamelling of the throne. بحکم کارفرما صرف شد پاک بمینا کاریش مینای افلاک
- Of what use are jewels and gold save to embellish this throne? For this purpose were the sea and the mine created. جز این تخت از زر و گوهر چه مقصود وجود بحر و کان را حکمت این بود
- Its priceless rubies have made pale the ruby lips of sweet-hearts. ز یاقوتش که در قید بها نیست لب لعل بتان را دل بجا نیست
- To form its base, crown-jewels and the jeweller's art have been on the *qui vive* a whole lifetime. برای پایه اش عمری کشیده گهر افسر بسر خاتم بدیده
- To make this throne, the world was depleted of its gold, the earth, of its treasures. بخرجش عالم از زر شد چنان پاک که شد از گنج خالی کیسه خاک
- If the sky could reach the base of the throne, it would offer the sun and the moon as gifts. رساند گر فلک خود را بپایش دهد خورشید و مه را رونمایش
- The nobleman who rubs his head against the base of the throne is raised one step above the sky. سرافرازی که سر بر پایه اش سود ز گردون پایه از تخت افزود
- Its decoration is the tribute of the sea and mine: its shadow is (like) the shelter of the throne of God. خراج بحر و کان پیرایه او پناه عرش و کرسی سایه او
- Glittering with multi-coloured gems, each one of which is a lantern to light the world. ز انواع جواهر گشته الوان چراغ عالمی هر دانه آن
- The floral gems of its panels shine like the light (of God) on Mt. Sinai. در اطرافش بود گللهای مینا فروزان چون چراغ از طور سینا
- Despairing of reaching the throne, Jamshīd has lent the gem (of his ring) to decorate the leg of the throne. چو میکرد از فرازش کوتاهی دست نگین خویش جم بر پایه اش بست
- With the lustrous rubies and pearls (of the throne) the dark night can provide a hundred skies with stars. شب تار از فروز لعل و گوهر تواند صد فلک را داد اختر

Not because of its gems but because it kisses the feet of Shāh Jahān (when he takes his seat) has the value of the throne ascended to heaven. دهد شاه جهان را بوسه بر پای از آن شد پایه قدرش فلک ساي

The world-bestowing King, full of youthful promise, spends all the wealth of the world on a single throne. کند شاه جهان بخش جوان بخت خراج عالمي را خرج یک تخت

The God Who hath elevated the Empyrean, it is His Power which hath constructed the throne. خداوندي که عرش و کرسی افراخت تواند قدرتش تختي چنین ساخت

Till the world exists, Shāh Jahān (King of the World) shall retain his seat on the throne. اثر باقي ست تا کون و مکان را بود بر تخت جا شاه جهان را

A throne like this is his proper seat: the tribute of the Seven Climes lies at his feet. بود تختي چنین هر روز جایش خراج هفت کشور زیر پایش

When the tongue wanted to express a chronogram, the mind suggested: *Awrang-i-Shāhinshāh-i-'ādil* (the throne of the just emperor). چو تاریخش زبان پرسید از دل بگفت اورنگ شاهنشاه عادل

Which are better, the gems of the sea and mine or the gems of speech? The gems in the Peacock Throne or the gems on the Peacock Throne? Sa'idā built the Peacock Throne but the following ode which he composed on that throne was finer. He could easily have been weighed a third time in silver or even in gold. It is a duty to Islamic culture to show that the most precious jewels of the Great Mughals were other than emeralds or diamonds.

THE UNIQUE ODE OF SA'IDĀ-I-GĪLĀNĪ

Sa'idā's ode consisted of 134 couplets wherein each hemistich was a chronogram. The first 24 hemistichs (12 couplets) gave 1000 A.H., the date of Shāh Jahān's birth; the succeeding 64 hemistichs (32 couplets) gave 1037 A.H., the date of Shāh Jahān's first coronation; then followed a hemistich which gave 1043 A.H., the date of Shāh Jahān's return from Kashmīr for his second coronation; and finally there were 179 hemistichs (89½ couplets) which gave 1044 A.H., the date of Shāh Jahān's second coronation on the Peacock Throne. Unfortunately, however, just as the Peacock Throne has perished and only some of its gems remain, so of the original ode, only 19¹ mutilated couplets survive in the *'Amal-i-Şāliḥ* or *Shāh Jahān-Nāmah* of Şāliḥ Kanbūh. Mr. Ghulām Yazdānī has edited this work in three volumes but not with the meticulous care of his later works, for the printed couplets, Vol. II, p. 90, contain

1. Actually 20; but I am disregarding one couplet which in all MSS. is so corrupt that it makes no sense.

all the errors to be found in MSS. plus errors of printing. Further, by offering no comment, the editor has perpetuated the blunder of Ṣāliḥ Kanbūh who states that the last 179 hemistichs give 1043 A.H. the date of Shāh Jahān's departure from Agra to Lahore en route to Kashmīr :

از هر مصرع نود بیت باقی تاریخ نهضت آن حضرت از دارالخلافة بسوی دارالسلطنت لاهور و نزهت آباد کشمیر که عبارت است از هزار و پهل و سه معلوم میگردد -

Shāh Jahān was not going to Kashmīr : he was returning from Kashmīr in 1043 A.H. as the ode itself states : : بسوئی هند، عنان تاب زود شد با جاه to take his seat on the Peacock Throne in 1044 A.H. And it was expressly to commemorate this second coronation that the ode was written : the last 90 couplets, therefore, give 1044 A.H.—with the exception of one remarkable hemistich which gives both in words and in number, the date of Shāh Jahān's return, viz., 1043 :

هزار بود و چهل سه بسال از هجرت

Were all the errors of scribes and printers, author and editor, only to be reserved for the greatest poetical achievement of the Mughal period and one of the greatest achievements of the human mind ?

However I was confronted with 38 printed hemistichs whereof no less than 17 were incorrect. Eleven of these I corrected by collation with MSS. in the library of the late Nawwāb Sālār Jang of Hyderabad, and for the remaining six I am offering my own emendations :

The One Incomparable God has caused the world to appear for the sake of Shāh Jahān, the King of the World.

خدای واحد بیچون جهان نموده عیان 1000

By (his) justice, bounty and benevolence, the emperor of the globe : learned, exalted, patron of scholars and a conqueror.

برای شاه جهان بادشاه کل جهان 1000

May he be king for a thousand² years, since he makes in the circuit of the globe, a hundred thousand lives happy !

بداد و جود و باحسان شهنشاه آفاق 1000

علیم و عالی و دانا نواز و ملک ستان 1000

هزار سال بماناد آنکه هر دم ازو 741

Read هزار ساله¹ بماناد شه که هر دم ازو 1000

بود بدور جهان صد هزار جان شادان 1000

These twelve couplets in praise of Shāh Jahān has my mind, (co-operating) with my heart, produced on the tongue, by the decree of Fate.

بمدح شاه جهان طبع این دوازده بیت 1000

ز قسمت ازل آورد از دلم بزبان 1000

Of those twelve, each hemistich, when written, is a chronogram of the birth of the King, the asylum of the world.

از آن دوازده هر مصرعی بگاه نگار 1000

کند تولد شاه جهان پناه بیان 1000

1. For the use of ساله cf. Qāsim Arslān:

مبارک باد بر صاحب قرانی فتح بنگاله چنین ملکی سپاهش را میسر باد هر ساله

2. In conformity with 1000 A.H., the date of Shāh Jahān's birth.

With a successful bid, he ascended the throne in Akbarābād, assisted by the all-knowing beneficent God.

It was in the year one thousand and forty-three of the Flight (1043 A.H.) when he came to Delhi with the (halo) of royalty and a mighty army.

In early spring there came to the garden of Sarhind, in his constant desire for a change of air,¹ the vernal flower (Shāh Jahān) smiling like the rose.

On the hills, are flowers of a thousand² hues; and at every step of his, a thousand³ streams, but better than the fountain of life.

Happy with the New Year and happy with the world, he decided to proceed (from Sarhind) to the city of Lahore.

Towards India he turned his reins quickly and went in all glory, driving like the blowing wind (his) dapple-grey steed swift as lightning.

With bounty and liberality, he returned to the capital; round his stirrups were the heavens; and the angels round his reins.

A thousand thanks (to God)! The beauty of the world has revived with the early glory of the throne of multi-coloured gems.

On every land where from that (throne) a shadow fell, heaven bestowed till eternity the wealth and stock of a mine.

With the throne of the king of the times, beauty and lustre are displaying a hundred shades in the universe.

با کبرآباد، از جهد، کامران سریر 1037

جلوس کرد ز تائید عالم منان 1037

هزار بود و چهل سه بسال از هجرت 1043

که شد بدھلی با شاہی و سپاہ گران 1044

بنوبہار بیامد بگلشن سرھند 1044

گل بہارابد، با ہوا، چو گل خندان 1044

ہزارگونہ بود گل بکوبہ و ہر قدمش 1044

ہزار چشمہ ولی بہ ز چشمہ حیوان 1044

ز کامرانی نوروز عزم کردہ نمود 1044

سوی مدینہ لاہور، بر جہان شادان 1044

بسوی ہند عنان تاب زد و شد با جاہ 1044

Read بسوی ہند، عنان تاب زد شد⁴ با جاہ

جہاندہ برق نما ابرش چو باد وزان 1044

بداد و جود بدارالخلافہ آمدہ باز 1044

فلک بدور رکاب و ملک بدور عنان 1044

ہزارشکر کہ بفزود باز حسن جہان 1044

ز نوبہار سریر جواہر الوان 1044

ہر زمین کہ از آن سایہ فتادہ فلک 1094

Read ہرزمی کہ از آن سایہ فتادہ فلک 1044

بداد تا بابد دستگاہ و مایہ کان 1044

جہاں و رنگ ز اورنگ بادشاہ زمن 1044

بداد گیتی صد رنگ بر زمین و زمان 1228

Read بکار جلوہ صد رنگ بر زمین و زمان 1044

1. The word ہوا means both 'air' and 'desire'; and I have tried to retain this double meaning in a free translation.

2 & 3. See note 2 on p. 60.

4. The error, here, is not numerical but عنان تاب as a compound word, followed by زود شد is better than

Lord from eternity, benefactor of all communities—he conquered the world sustained by the power of Faith.

خدایو ملک ملک ، بادشاه دین و دول 1223

or خدیو ملک و ملل بادشاه دین و دول 1239

Read خدایگان ز ازل ، قبله گاه کل ملل 1044

جهان کشاد بامداد قوت ایمان 1044

O asylum of the world, O large-hearted emperor, thou art an ocean of generosity and of exquisite, infinite grandeur.

جهان پناها ، شاهنشهی و دریا دل 1044

محیطی از کرم و جود لیک بی پایان 500

Read محیطی از کرم و جاه خوب بی پایان 1044

With the terror of thy mace and spear, always does the heart of the enemy tremble underground, like a pulsating vein.

ز سهم گرز و سنانت دل عدو ، جاوید 1044

1044 شود بزیز زمین چون رگ جهنده طیان

For this reason is thy foe's head like a black stone because it always provides a whetstone for thy spear!

از آن بود سر دشمن برنگ سنگ سیاه 1203

که از برای حسامت بود مدام فسان 1043

Read از آن بود سر دشمن بسان سنگ سیاه 1044

که از برای حسامت دهد مدام فسان 1044

The Arabs say that God in His mercy has given three things to three peoples—the hands to the Chinese, the brains to the Greeks and the tongue to the Arabs. But to the poet-artist Sa'idā-i-Gilānī He had given all the three—the Chinese hands, the Grecian intellect and the Arabian tongue.

POETRY OF MUGHAL ROYALTY

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POETRY OF M

POETRY OF MUGHAL ROYALTY

THE poetry of kings is the king of poetry—this statement, though complimentary, is nevertheless true of the royal poetry of Mughal India, for Bābur and several of his descendants up to the fifth generation wrote and spoke poetry, even finer than the poetry of the poets they patronized. Unfortunately, however, though many are the admirers of Mughal culture in India, no one has attempted to sift the genuine verses of the Great Mughals; and the *Cambridge History of India* does not even mention Humāyūn as a poet, though the unique *Dīwān-i-Humāyūn* which I have discovered in Patna fully corroborates the well-known fact that Humāyūn wrote excellent poetry. And the local scholars took no notice of this *dīwān*, thinking it was spurious, whereas it is genuinely the work of the Emperor and contains his pen-name in no less than eight verses:

Damsels of my adoration, seek
from me neither sanity nor
consciousness, for Humāyūn
lies prostrate in an ecstasy of
unconsciousness.

عقل و هوش از من مجوئید ای بتان
چون هایون بی‌هشی افتاده است

Verily in the condition of union
with the Friend I had, like
Humāyūn, unconsciously es-
caped from self.

حقا که چون هایون در حال وصل بیخود
با دوست در حکایت از خویش رسته بودم

When Humāyūn looks at thy face
(he says): 'before me there is
a veil of light' (because excess-
ive light is darkness).

هایون بروی تو چون بنگرد
حجایست از نور در پیش ما

O Humāyūn, as a legacy of love,
a sigh is enough: the nett
result of our love is air!

ای هایون ز عشق آهی بس
حاصل عشق ما هوا باشد

Humāyūn, don't get restless
because of her hair: the mis-
chief of her amorous glances is
enough for thee.

هایون ز مویش مشوش مشو
ترا فتنه غمزهایش بسند

I saw a Hindu lad in the rank of
battle: rose-red was his face
with the flush of wine.

هندو بچه دیدم اندر صف جنگ
رخساره او ز نشامی گلرنگ

گفتم که خراب لعل میگون تو ام در خنده شد و گفت 'هایون لب و سنگ' "I am distraught by thy wine-like ruby lips," said I. He parted his lips in smile. "Are these lips a stone, Humāyūn?" he replied.

نبودی جنت الیوا نبودی این هایون را که جنت هم بسر گردانی آدم نمی ارزد Humāyūn does not resent if he is denied the Supreme Paradise, for even Paradise is not worth the wandering of man (Adam) on earth.

من هیچ نیم هیچ نمیدارم نام بر فضل تو مانیم شب و روز مدام I am nothing at all—devoid even of name: I am dependent on Thy grace, night and day.

آنگاه بحق حرمت سهر لام بر بنده هایون برسان فیض تمام Then for the sake of the Holy Lord of Lām (i.e., the Prophet), shower upon this slave, Humāyūn, all Thy blessings.

Lām is the first letter of the Tradition: "لو لا ک لما خلقت الافلاک" "if it were not for thee, I should not have created the heavens." The 'thee' refers to the Prophet; so the Lord of Lām means the Prophet Muḥammad.

POETRY OF BĀBUR

The emperor, Bābur, had four sons, Humāyūn, Kāmrān, 'Askārī and Hindāl, born in 913, 919, 922 and 923 A.H. respectively, all of whom were poets: the last two are known by stray verses; the first three by their *dīwāns*. Bābur's *dīwān* was published by Sir E. Denison Ross in 1910; Kāmrān's Persian *dīwān* of 186 verses, based on a copy stamped with the seals of the Mughal Emperors, has been published by the late Prof. Maḥfūzu'l-Ḥaq of Calcutta; and my edition of Humāyūn's *dīwān* is being published in the Silver Jubilee number of *Islamic Culture*. Bābur and Kāmrān were bilingual poets with this difference that Bābur wrote more in Turkish than in Persian, and Kāmrān more in Persian than in Turkish. Bābur quotes frequently from the great classical poets of Persia like Firdawsī, Nizāmī, Sa'dī, Ḥāfiẓ and Jāmī; and it is not always clear whether the verses given in the *Bābur-Nāmāh* are Bābur's own compositions or quotations. For example, at the field of Panipat, Bābur recited the couplet:

پریشان جمعی و جمعی پریشان گرفتار قومی و قومی عجائب

Mrs. Beveridge is not satisfied with her translation of this couplet because she could not trace it to its origin.¹ Professor Ghanī, however, has no such scruples: he traces it to Bābur himself as one of Bābur's spontaneous productions;² though actually,

1. *Bābur-Nāmāh*, Vol. II, p. 470: "A wandering band with mind awander: in the grip of a tribe (and) a tribe unfamiliar." "These two lines do not translate easily without the context of their original place of occurrence. I have not found their source," note Vol. II, p. 470.

2. *Persian Literature at the Mughal Court*, Bābur, p. 50: "He (Bābur) recited off-hand a Persian verse which he composed on the spot."

it is a quotation from an ode of the Persian poet, Salmān-i-Sāwajī:¹

کنون پنج ماه است تا من اسیرم
پریشان جمعی و جمعی پریشان
بیخداد در در بلا و مصائب
گرفتار قومی و قومی عجائب

It is now five months since I have been languishing in Baghdād in pain and misery.

Distracted by the mob, ruffled in mind : in the grip of a people and a strange people.

Bābur's citation, therefore, is very apposite : he finds himself distracted in mind, confronted with the vast and strange² Indian army. Mughal royalty produced good poetry because of a long period of apprenticeship under the great classical writers of Persia.

The genuine Persian verses of Bābur are only 19 whereof 13 are quoted here and six others, comprising 3 quatrains are to be found on pages 16 and 18 of the *Dīwān-i-Bābur Pādishāh* edited by Sir E. Denison Ross, Calcutta, 1910. The last quatrain, addressed to Mawlānā Riddle (Mu'ammā) was discovered by me in the Bankipore Library MS., Bayād, No. 1998, f. 65^a:

New Year and spring and wine
and a sweetheart are good :
Bābur have a good time for the
world is not to be had a second
time.

نوروز و نو بهار و می و دلبری خوش است
بابر بعیش کوش که عالم دو باره نیست³

Spring has come but the lover
who has no beloved takes no
interest in the vernal air or the
garden of tulips.

آمد بهار و دلشده را که یار نیست
پروای لاله زار و هوای بهار نیست⁴

I have seen much mischief upon
the planet but not like the
mischief in those eyes of thine.

در روزگار فتنه بسی دیده ام ولی
چشم تو فتنه است که در روزگار نیست

Addressed to Nizām Khān, Mīr of Bayānah, with a proverb in the last hemistich :
Strive not with the Turk, O Mīr
of Bayānah : his courage and
skill are obvious :

با ترک ستیزه مکن ای میر بیانه
چالاکی و مردانگی ترک عیان است⁵

If thou comest not soon nor dost
give ear to counsel, what need
to explain what is patent ?

گر زود نیائی و نصیحت نه کنی گوش
آن را که عیان است چه حاجت بیان است

Addressed to the late Khwājah Naṣīru'd-Dīn 'Ubaydullah, known as Khwājah Ahrār, 806-895 A.H. :

We have wasted our life on the
lower, the appetitive self and
stand self-condemned before
men of God.

در هوای نفس گمره عمر ضائع کرده ایم
پیش اهل الله از افعال خود شرمنده ایم

1. *Dīwān-i-Salmān-i-Sāwajī*, p. 26, Bombay ed.

2. Tīmūr is said to have told his soldiers not to be afraid of the elephant for it merely carries its tail in front.

3. *Bayād*, Bankipore MS., No. 1998, f. 64b.

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Bābur-Nāmah*, Vol. II, p. 529.

یک نظر با مخلصان خسته دل فرما که ما
 خواجگی را مانده ایم و خواجگی را بنده ایم¹
 Cast a single glance on thy single-minded devotees for we have lived for the Master and are slaves of the Master.

The Khwājah's reply, projected from the grave :

اخلاص و عقیده تو روشن شده است
 حالات و طریقه ات مبرهن شده است
 Thy sincerity and faith have become manifest : thy condition and way of life have been proved (beyond doubt).

حایل چو نماند زود بر خیز و بیا
 دلخواه تو تربیت معین شده است²
 Since there is no impediment in the way, arise and come quickly for thou shalt be looked after according to thy wishes.

A chronogram on the conquest of Chanderī, 934 A.H. :

بود چندی مقام چندیری
 پر ز کفار و دار حربی خرب
 "Was for awhile the station Chanderī, pagan-full, the seat of hostile force.

فتح کردم بحرب قلعه آن
 گشت تاریخ : فتح دارالحرب³
 By fighting I vanquished its fort : conquest of enemy country, being the chronogram."

Addressed to Mawlānā Riddle, Shihāb-i-Mu'ammā'i :

نامت ز عجم رفته بملک عرب است
 وز نامه تو در دل محزون طرب است
 Thy name has spread from Persia to Arabia ; and thy letter brings joy to the heart in pain.

هر کس بدر آرد ز معما نامی
 نام تو برآورده معما عجب است
 Always does the riddle lead to a name, but curiously, thy name leads to a Riddle !

Was Bābur thinking of the following couplets : " always the sea produces pearls but thy pearls (teeth) produce the sea (tears of the lover); " ⁴ " all men seek perfection but here is Perfection (Kamāl) seeking thee; " ⁵ " the Earth consumes man but I did not know that man consumed earth (the corn presented to the poet being full of sawdust), " ⁶ when he wrote to Mawlānā Riddle : "always does the riddle lead to a name but thy name leads to a Riddle ?" This rare poetical device is also found in the *Dīwān-i-Humāyūn* when entering Persia as a refugee, Humāyūn wrote to Shāh Tahmāsp : " all kings seek the shadow of the phoenix (humā), but here is Humā (Humāyūn) seeking the shadow of a king " :

شاهان همه سایه ها میخواستند
 بنگر که ها آمده در سایه تو

1. *Dīwān-i-Bābur Pādīshāh*, ed. Sir E. Denison Ross, p. 16.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

3. *Bābur-Nāmāh*, Vol. II, p. 596.

4. *Shihāb-i-Iṣfahānī* :

5. *Kamālū'd-Dīn-i-Iṣfahānī* :

6. *Ibid* :

صدف پروردن از دریا عجب نیست
 صدف بنگر که دریا پرورستی
 جویان کمال اند بجان اهل هنر
 و آنگاه بجان کمال جوینده تست
 خاک مردم خورد ندانستم
 که خورد مردم ای برادر خاک

to which the Shāh replied, quoting from Hāfiz:

His Majesty the Phoenix will fall into our snare
Should Humāyūn arrive with his stately air.

همای اوج سعادت بدام ما افتد اگر ترا گذری بر مقام ما افتد

Similarly, Shāh Jahān's poet-laureate, Kalīm, says of the water spouting from a fountain "always the sky rains water on the earth but here is the earth raining water on the sky:"

گر اول آمدی باران ز گردون زمین بر آسمان میبارد اکنون

POETRY OF HUMĀYŪN AND KĀMRĀN

My edition of Humāyūn's *diwān* consists of 246 verses, comprising 16 ghazals, 60 quatrains, a mathnawī and fards; but there is enough material embedded therein to interest not only the aesthete but the historian.

When Humāyūn ascended the throne in 937 A.H. he was advised to leave 'no rubs nor botches in the work,' but faithful to his father's dying injunctions, he spared the life of Kāmrān and received from him two congratulatory poems:

May thy realm perpetually increase; may thy star continue to rise!

دولتت دسبدم افزون بادا طالعت فرخ و میمون بادا

May the dust of thy road be the antimony for my eyes—dejected as I am!

هر غباری که ز راهت خیزد کحل چشم من محزون بادا

May the dust which rises from the road traversed by the beloved (Laylā), settle in the eyes of the lover (Majnūn), its proper place!

خاک کو از ره لیلی خیزد جایی او دیده مجنون بادا

May a hundred Dariuses and Farīdūns be thy slaves, like me!

بنده حلقه بگوش تو چو من صد چو دارا و فریدون بادا

Whosoever doth not encompass thee (with his love), may he be expelled from the vault of heaven!

هر که گرد تو چو پرکار نگشت او ازین دایره بیرون بادا

Kāmrān, as long as the world lasts, may Humāyūn be the king of the world!

کامران تا که جهان راست بقا خسرو دهر همایون بادا

* * *

چشم بر راه تو داریم شد ایامی چند وقت آن شد که نهی جانب ما گمی چند
For several days our eyes have been on thy road, what if thou wert to take in our direction a step or two!

آنکه هرگز نفرستد سوي ما جامي چند چه شود گر کندم شاد بدشنامي چند
 He who never cares to send us a cup what if he were to regale us with his bad words, one or two!

تا کسی میل دلم را برخت پی نبرد دولت وصل تو خواهم به دلارامي چند
 That others may not guess thou art my beloved, I pray for thy union with sweethearts, one or two.

بهر صید دل ما دانه خال تو بس است هر دم از لطف منه بر سر ما دامی چند
 To bait my heart, the grain of thy beauty-spot is enough: why lay snares with thy tresses, one or two?

ما خراباتی رندیم تو با ما منشین حیف باشد که نشینی تو بدنامی چند
 Be not with us who frequent and haunt the tavern: alas that thou shouldst be in the company of libertines, one or two!

کامران این غزل نو بهایون بفرست باشد ارسال کند سوي تو انعامی چند
 Kāmran, send this new lyric to Humāyūn: he may honour thee with gifts, one or two.

For a time Humāyūn's cause prospered: he asked Bahādūr Shāh of Gujarāt to stop his aggressive campaign against the Rānā of Chitor, 941/1534:

ای که هستی غنیم شهر چتور کافران را چطور میگیری؟
 O thou who art the enemy of Chitor, how (chaṭawr) shalt thou seize the infidels?

بادشاهی رسید بر سر تو تو نشسته چتور میگیری!
 A king has come down upon thee: shalt thou seize Chitor sitting complacently?

But dark days were ahead: having lost the battles of Chaura, 1539 and Qanawj, 1540 A.D. and with them his brother's love, Humāyūn retreated to Lahore and wrote to Kāmran:

در آنکه گرچه خود نمائی باشد پیوسته ز خویشتن جدائی باشد
 Although one's image be seen in a mirror, it always remains apart from one's self.

خود را بمثال غیر دیدن عجب است این بوالعجبی کار خدائی باشد
 It is strange to see one's self as some one else: this marvel is the work of God.

It is an extremely pretty quatrain: "being my brother," says Humāyūn, "I thought you were my image, part of myself but like the image in the mirror which though part of one's self is apart from one's self, you remain apart from me and look upon me as somebody else: this unkindness on your part is by God's will."

Humāyūn did not lose heart: to his father-in-law he wrote in graceful verse:

آنکه مغزش زیاده است از پوست یار دیرین ماست بابا دوست
 He whose kernel is worth more than his shell, is our old friend, Bābā Dūst.

and with a few select friends, entered Persia as a refugee. His father had quoted Salmān-i-Sāwajī in his hour of trial: Humāyūn followed suit but with greater skill,

so much so that it is perhaps the most apposite citation in all literature :

O king, the phoenix of my adventurous soul, hath since a long time made the summit of the Caucasus of contentment, its abode. خسروا عمر یست تا عنقای عالی همتم قلۀ قاف قناعت را نشیمن کرده است

My enemy is *Shīr* (lion or *Shīr Shāh*) who many a time showed his back but has now turned his face towards me. دشمنم شیر است و عمری پشت بر من کرده بود این دم از راه عداوت روی بر من کرده است

I crave this favour of the king that he may do unto me what 'Alī did unto Salmān in the desert of Arzhan. التماس این ز شه دارم که با من آن کند آنچه با سلمان علی در دشت ارژن کرده است

There are four puns in this fragment : (a) the phoenix lives on Qāf, Mt. Caucasus, and qāf is also a letter of the Arabic alphabet, and the word 'contentment,' begins with this letter—so the phoenix (*humā*) lives on Mt. Qāf; and the other phoenix (*humā*) *Humāyūn* lives in the Qāf of contentment; (b) *humā* is the phoenix and also *Humāyūn*; (c) one day in the desert of Arzhan, a lion confronted *Salmān-i-Fārisī*, *Salmān* the Persian, who called upon 'Alī for aid, and 'Alī appeared and drove away the lion—similarly will *Humāyūn* now be saved from his leonine adversary, *Shīr Shāh*, by *Shāh Tahmāsp*; and (d) *Salmān* is both *Salmān*, the Persian, saved by 'Alī, and the poet *Salmān-i-Sāwajī* whom *Humāyūn* is quoting. In the works of *Salmān-i-Sāwajī*, the second couplet reads : *طالع شیر است* i.e., my horoscope is lion (Leo). *Humāyūn* changed it to *دشمنم شیر است* i.e., my enemy is lion; my enemy is *Shīr Shāh*; and by altering a single word made *Salmān-i-Sāwajī*'s fragment fit all the circumstances of his own case.

To the period of exile must also be ascribed the devotional verses which are the glory of *Humāyūn*'s *dīwān*.

In praise of God:

O Thou Whose essence is everlasting, like unto Thee there is none : universal is Thy command; pre-existence is Thy realm. ای ذات تو لایزال مثل تو عدم امر تو علی العموم ملک تو قدم

Even if the sea were ink, and the skies, the ink-pot, the pen would despair of describing Thy attributes. اگر بحر شود مداد و افلاک دوات عاجز شود از شرح صفات تو قلم

"Even if the sea were ink" is a quotation from the *Holy Qur'ān*, chapter 18,

v. 109 : لو كان البحر مدادا .

In praise of the Prophet Muḥammad :

○ Muḥammad, prince of the world in essential existence, verily thou art the friend of the living worshipped God. اي سرور کائنات در اصل وجود حقا که توئی حبیب حي معبود

Arise and display thy world-illuminating beauty, for thou art the purport of the world's creation. بر خیز نما جمال عالم آرا زیرا که توئی ز خلق عالم مقصود

Thou art the monarch of the throne of the prophets; thou art the sun of the sphere of the saints. سلطان سریر انبیائی تو خورشید سپهر اولیائی تو

Every one follows thy path : thou showest mankind the way of the Religious Law. مردم همه پیرو طریق تو اند ره شرع بخلق رهنمائی تو

Having won Shāh Ṭahmāsp's favours by his graceful compliments :

The streaks of dawn flash forth from thy countenance; the gates of victory have been opened in thy face. اي از رخ تو نموده انوار صبح بر روی تو شد کشاده ابواب فتوح

For thee, my prayer to God is this : "Be ever happy; unrivalled as a monarch; like Noah in age." خواهم ز خدا همیشه باشی خرم در پادشاهی فرید و در عمر چونوح

Humāyūn took Kābul in 952 A.H.—he took Kābul کابل را گرفت, being the chronogram of conquest, 952. Then he wrote to his loyal governor, Bayram Khān of Qandahār (955 A.H.) :

Once again Victory hath appeared from the unseen world and jubilant are the hearts of my friends. باز فتحي ز غيب روي نمود که دل دوستان ازو بکشد

Thank God, once again we are happy—bubbling with laughter in the company of friends. شکر لله که باز شادانيم بر رخ یار و دوست خندانيم

Today is a sort of New Year's Day, O Bayram, when everyone is everywhere happy. روز نوروز يرم است امروز دل احباب ييغم است امروز

Hereafter we shall think of India, and plan the reconquest of Sind. بعد ازین فکر کار هندکنيم عزم تسخير ملک سندکنيم

But Humāyūn had scotched the snake, not killed it: she closed and was herself again, that is, Kāmṛān defeated Humāyūn in the field of Qipchāp and gloated in impromptu verse over the false news of Humāyūn's death:

A little breathing-time after the death of such an enemy I deem better far than a hundred years of life. دَمِي حَيَاتِ پَس از مَرْدَن چَنان دَشْمَن گان بَرَم کِه ز صَد سَال زَنَد گَانِي بَه

Humāyūn, however, regained Kābul, and Kāmṛān fled to the court of Islām Shāh who treated him with scant courtesy. After telling the Afghan that the vicissitudes of fortune had imposed uncouth men over men of culture, Kāmṛān sought shelter in Tattah where he was caught and blinded by order of Humāyūn. "Whatever thou metest out to me deserves my thanks, whether it be the blinding needle or the piercing blade" was the last and best poetical effort of this unfortunate prince.

Humāyūn was a mystic: "in movement the existence of the universe is like the water-wheel and the flow of water," says he apropos of this changing and yet unchanging world. And he had the mystic's premonition of his own impending death:

O God, with Thy infinite grace, make me wholly Thine: make me a gnostic of Thy Special Substances (Names and Attributes). يَا رَب بَكْمَالِ لُطْفِ خَاصِمِ گَرْدَان عَارِف بِحَقَائِقِ خَوَاصِمِ گَرْدَان

I am sore oppressed at heart by the tyranny of reason: call me Thy madman and release me from earthly bondage. از عَقْل جَفا کَار دَل افگَار شَدَم دِيوانَه خُودخُوان و خَلاصِمِ گَرْدَان

This quatrain was produced spontaneously a few days before the fatal fall from the terrace in 963 A.H. "Humāyūn Bādshāh fell from the terrace:" هَمَايُون بَادشَاه از بام افتاد is the chronogram of death, but it is a wrong chronogram, short by a year.

POETRY OF AKBAR

Akbar cultivated his mind through the ear, not the eye—a remarkable instance of a person who did not know how to read and write and yet was steeped in culture. Here is an exchange of verses between Akbar and Khān Zamān of Jawnpūr who was eventually killed as a rebel in 974 A.H.

Khān Zamān's first quatrain:

Thy gate is the present times' Wall of Alexander: thy troops are Gog (and Magog). اي سَد سَكَنَدَر زَمَانِه در تو ياجوج بود سپاهي لشکر تو

Thy epoch reveals that the day of Resurrection has come, for thou art the Antichrist and Khwājah Aminā is thy Ass. در دور تو آثار قِيامت پيدا دجال توئی، خواجه امينا خر تو

Khawājah Amīnu'd-Dīn Maḥmūd of Herāt was Akbar's bakhshī and commander of 1000 : he died in Nov., 1574 A.D. The other references are to the belief that just before Resurrection, Antichrist (Dajjāl) will come riding on his Ass and the tribes of Gog and Magog (Yājūj and Mājūj) will burst through the wall (Sadd) which keeps them back and will overrun the earth and eat up all the grass and herbs and drink up the rivers.

Akbar's reply :

O Khān Zamān, thy army is large, but my regime has given thee pomp and power. ای خان زمان که پر بود لشکر تو شد دولت من باعث کرو فر تو

May I be less than the Ass of Antichrist today, if tomorrow I do not cut off thy head. کمتر باشم ز خر دجال امروز فردا من اگر جدا نسازم سر تو

Khān Zamān's second quatrain :

Till there is a trace of crown lands in thy realm, hardly will thy troops fight me. تا هست اثر خالصه در کشور تو مشکل که بمن جنگ کند لشکر تو

Vaunt not thy gold and silver, for only thy servant will part with his head, for the sake of thy gold and silver. بگذر ز زر و سیم که تا نوکر تو از سرگذرد برای سیم و زر تو

Akbar's second reply :

Although the dust of my door is thy coronet, to-day thou dost not bow thy head before me. با آنکه بود خاک درم افسر تو امروز بمن فرو نیاید سر تو

From my good fortune accrues to thee gold and silver ; and that money has given thee thy military strength. از دولت من هست ترا سیم و زری وز زور زر است ، قدرت لشکر تو

Khān Zamān's third quatrain :

O King of the times, I am thy meanest servant, but fear deters me from approaching thee. ای شاه زمان منم کمین نوکر تو وز ترس نمی توانم آمد بر تو

From afar thou seekest my life, how then shall I seek thy shadow ? از دور تو قصد کشتن من داری نزدیک چسان توانم آمد بر تو

Akbar's final reply :

Since thou hast spoken the truth, may God befriend thee : may the blessings of God alight on thy parents ! گفتی تو چو راستی ، خدا یاور تو صد رحمت حق بر پدر و مادر تو

Tamper not with my name on the coins and in the Friday sermons, so that I may not think of annexing thy territory. تغییر مده تو سکه و خطبه من تا من نکم آرزوی کشور تو

The contemporary 'Urafātu'l-'Āshiqīn, Bankipore MS. No. 685 f. 222^a does not state whether Akbar's replies were of his own composition ; but the following three verses which the 'Urafāt definitely ascribes to Akbar¹ were probably Faydī's, as suggested by Badā'ūnī (II, p. 268) :

The Lord Who has given me the empire and a discriminating heart and a strong arm,

دل دانا و بازوي قوي داد

خداوندي که ما را خسروي داد

Has guided me in righteousness and justice—and has dispelled all other notions save justice from my mind,

بجز عدل از خيال ما برون کرد

بعدل و داد ما را رهنمون کرد

His praise surpasses man's understanding : Great is His Power ; Allāhu Akbar !

تعالی شانه الله اکبر

بود وصفش ز فهم و عقل برتر

The last words, Allāhu Akbar mean both 'God is great' and 'Akbar is God,' wherefore, adds Badā'ūnī, "when Akbar read the verses on Friday the first Jumādī, 987 A.H., he stammered and stuttered." It is interesting to note that as the Emperor's name was Jalālu'd-Dīn Muḥammad Akbar, members of the Divine Faith used the ambiguous salutations : "Allāhu Akbar" and the reply, "Jalla Jalālahu."

Bābur and Humāyūn were fond of punning ; so was Akbar. In Persian, kal is bald ; and in Arabic, kalla is "not at all ;" so apropos of the bald Yādgār Ridwī who had revolted in Kashmīr, Akbar said : "Can the cap of sovereignty and the crown of royalty be acquired by a bald fellow (kal) ? No (kalla), God forbid."

کلاه خسروي و تاج شاهي بهر کل کي رسد حاشا و کلا

Similarly, "I don't take 'bang,' don't bring it : I don't play on the harp, don't bring it ;" or conversely, "I don't take 'bang,' bring wine ; I don't play on the harp, bring the lute"—for 'mayārīd' means 'don't bring' and 'may ārīd' means 'bring wine ;' and 'nayārīd' means 'don't bring' and 'nay ārīd' means 'bring the lute.'

من چنگ نمي زنم ، نيآريد من بنگ نمي خورم ، ميآريد

or

من چنگ نمي زنم - ني آريد من بنگ نمي خورم - مي آريد

Similarly, "I shall hide the secret of love from everybody : I am not mad or Majnūn to reveal it"—for in Persian literature, the lover par excellence is the mad Majnūn.

من سر عشق را ز همه کس نهان کنم² ديوانه نيستم که چو مجنون عيان کنم

"If Salīm wished to be Emperor, he might have killed me and spared Abu'l-Faḍl," said Akbar, on hearing of Abu'l-Faḍl's assassination, and then recited the following verse :

My Shaykh was coming headlong to kiss my feet—and now he has come without head and feet.

شيخ ما از شوق بيحد چون سوي ما آمده³

ز اشتياق پايوسي بي سرو پا آمده

1. f. 121^a : این ابیات که خود گفته بود :

2. Bayād, Bankipore MS., No. 1998, f. 65a.

3. Blochmann, Ā'in, Vol. I, Introduction, xxvii.

Similarly, the following verses of Akbar must have been produced spontaneously : the question of writing them out did not arise, the Emperor not knowing how to write :

In Majnūn's neck is not a chain
to restrain his madness : Love
hath put the arm of friendship
round his neck. نیست زنجیر جنون در گردن مجنون زار
عشق دست دوستی در گردنش افکنده است¹

On the petals of the rose are not
dew-drops but tears fallen from
the eyes of the nightingale. شبنم مگو که بر ورق گل فتاده است
کان قطره‌ها ز دیده بلبل فتاده است²

I shed tears of blood and emptied
my heart : strange is thy love
which makes me happy when
I weep. گریه کردم ز غمت موجب خوشحالی شد
ریختم خون دل از دیده ، دلم خالی شد³

Last night, in the lane of wine-
sellers, I bought with gold, a
bowl of wine. دوشینه بکوی می فروشان
پیمانه می بزر خریدم

And now I am heavy-headed with
the after-effect : I gave gold to
buy an aching head ! اکنون ز خار سر گرانم
زر دادم و درد سر خریدم⁴

Bent is my back with the weight
of sins, what shall I do ? Nor
to the mosque nor to the
temple leads the road, what
shall I do ? از بار گنه خمید پشتم ، چکنم ؟
نه راه بمسجد نه کنشتم ، چکنم ؟

My place is neither among pagans
nor Muslims : unfit I am, both
for hell and for heaven, what
shall I do ? نه در صف کافر نه مسلمان جایم
نه لایق دوزخ نه بهشت ، چکنم ؟⁵

POETRY OF JAHĀNGĪR

Among the virtues of the Great Mughals is a frank acknowledgment of vice : if Humāyūn was fond of opium : " I own treasures which are the envy of Cræsus, that is, I have opium in my purse :

من گنج روان رشک قارون دارم
یعنی که درون کیسه افیون دارم

Jahāngīr drank wine till there was a passage in his throat and drink in India : " drink wine to the garden in bloom : the clouds have gathered thick ; drink in excess :

ساغر می بر رخ گلزار میباید کشید
ابر بسیار است می بسیار میباید کشید⁶

1. Akbar-Nāmah.

2. 'Urafātu'l-'Āshiqīn, Bankipore MS., f. 121b.

3. Ibid., f. 121b.

4. Ibid., f. 121b.

5. Ibid., f. 121a.

6. Tuzuk-i-Jahāngīrī, Neval Kishore ed., p. 235.

"We are," says a fine Eastern satire, "the reverse of Europeans: they are dynamic; we are static. They write from left to right; we from right to left. They consider wine lawful and drink in moderation; we consider it unlawful and drink in excess."¹ Jahāngīr says that he composed the verse on the spur of the moment, and cites other examples of his impromptu verses: one of these was on a marble throne: "the seat of the King of the Seven Climes, Jahāngīr, son of Akbar, the King:"

نشیمن گاه شاه هفت کشور جهانگیر این شاهنشاه اکبر

Another was on his own portrait sent to 'Ādil Khān:²

I look towards thee always with favour: sit securely under the shadow of my government. آسوده نشین بسایه دولت ما ای سوي تو دایم نظر رحمت ما

I am sending thee a portrait of myself: see then my inner self in the outer face. تا معنی ما بینی از صورت ما سوي تو شبیه خویش کردیم روان

and yet another was on the Jahāngīrī otto of roses sent to Khān 'Ālam when he was returning from Persia:³

I am sending thee my own scent to draw thee the more quickly to myself. که آرم ترا زودتر سوي خویش بسویت فرستاده ام بوي خویش

Like Bābur's memoirs, the *Tuzuk-i-Jahāngīrī* is full of quotations from the classical poets and gives specimens of the Emperor's own poetry.⁴

POETRY OF DĀRĀ SHUKŪH

Dārā Shukūh, the eldest son of Shāh Jahān, was not a dilettante: the *Sirr-i-Akbar* attests his knowledge of Hindu Philosophy: "in the Vedas and more especially in the Upanishads," writes the Prince, "is contained the whole essence of pantheism." In the realm of poetry his contribution is chiefly mystical quatrains which have been collected by Dr. Bikramajit Hasrat (see *Islamic Culture*, Vol. XVIII, pp. 145-164, 1944 A.D. where a reference is also made to an untraceable *dīwān* of 133 *ghazals*). Some good examples may be found in the *Hasanātu'l-'Ārifīn*, composed in 1062 A.H., where the Prince illustrates the pithy sayings of eminent mystics by verses of his own composition:

The gnostic will irradiate thy heart and soul: he will make a garden of the thorn plucked from his feet. خاری که کند ز پاش گلشن سازد عارف دل و جان تو مزین سازد

The perfect man will purge all defects away from every one: one burning candle will light a thousand candles. یک شمع هزار شمع روشن سازد⁵ کامل همه را ز نقص بیرون آرد

1. ایشان حلال میبخارند و کم میخورند ما حرام میبخاریم و بسیار میخوریم

2. *Tuzuk-i-Jahāngīrī*, Neval Kishore ed., p. 246.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 287.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 77.

5. *Hasanātu'l-'Ārifīn*, MS. No. 553, Hyderabad State Library, f. 113^a.

The gnostics are always in a new ecstatic state : they are religious leaders, not followers.

Lions eat only on what they have preyed : the fox eats the carcass abandoned in the sun.

هر دم برسد بعارفان ذوق جدید خود مجتهد اند نه ز اهل تقلید

شیران نخورند جز شکار خود را روباه خورد فتاده و لحم قدید¹

* * *

Without death can thy name be immortal ? Without a servant can the master be noble ?

'Tis the relative which manifests the Absolute : the master is master because of the servant.

بی مرگ کجا نام تو گردد زنده بی بنده کجاست صاحبی زبنده

از قید شود وجود مطلق ظاهر صاحب نبود اگر نباشد بنده²

* * *

Dost thou desire to be credited with insight ? Abandon, then, the wealthy state for the ecstatic.

Thou becomest not a theist by saying : He is One ; the mouth is not sweetened by saying, 'How sweet !'

خواهی که شوی داخل ارباب نظر از مال بجال بایدت کرد گذر

از گفتن توحید موحّد نشوی شیرین نشود دهان ز نام شکر³

* * *

Was not the Father of mankind disowned by Satan ? Did not Ḥusayn (ibn-Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj) say, '(I am) the Truth,' and go to the gallows ?

'Tis the evil and malicious spirit of the Mullās which has tortured every saint and prophet.⁴

ز ابلیس به بوالبشر چه انکار رسید حق گفت حسین و بر سر دار رسید

از شومی و شرفس ملایانست با هر نبی و ولی که آزار رسید

* * *

Death hath no sting for the mystic : the awakened heart fears no sleep.

If thy soul hath abandoned thy body, what matters ? When the skin becomes old, the snake casts it off.

از مرگ نباشد اهل دل را آزار وز خواب تترسد چو شود دل بیدار

گرجان تو جسم را بینداخت چه باک چون کهنه شود، پوست بیندازد مار⁵

"Paraded with insult through the bazaar of Delhi, the captive Dārā was murdered by some slaves of Awrangzīb (30th August, 1659) who had got the Mullās to issue a sentence that according to Islamic Law, Dārā deserved an apostate's death."⁶ But the secular Republic of India will invest his name with a halo of glory and prescribe the verses which the Mullās had proscribed.

1. Ḥasanātu'l-ʿĀrifīn, Hyderabad State Library, MS. No. 685, f. 50b. 2. Ibid., MS. No. 685, f. 50b-51a.

3. Cf. شیرین نشود دهان بجلوا گفتن which is a proverb. MS. No. 685, f. 44a. 4. MS. No. 685, f. 52a.

5. Ḥasanātu'l-ʿĀrifīn, Hyderabad State Library, MS. No. 553, f. 113a.

6. Sir Jadunath Sarkar, *Studies in Mughal India*, p. 41.

REPARTEES OF NŪR JAHĀN, MUMTĀZ MAḤAL AND ZĪBU'N-NISĀ

"Separate the living from the dead." In obedience to this law I have not mixed up the genuine verses of Mughal kings and princes, extracted from their own *dīwāns* or memoirs or contemporary works, with the verses of Mughal queens and princesses, whose authenticity has not been established. Sir Jadunath Sarkar does not accept the *Dīwān-i-Makhfi* as the work of Zību'n-Nisā;¹ and the capping couplets here given may also be spurious, but they are too refined and elegant to be disregarded.

1. "I am not the nightingale," said Jahāngīr, "to fill the air with my plaintive cries. I am the moth that dies without uttering a single moan :"

بلبل نیم که نعره کنم درد سر دهم پروانه ام که سوزم و دم بر نیاورم

"I am not the moth that dies an instantaneous death," replied Nūr Jahān, "I suffer a lingering death like the candle that burns through the night without uttering a single moan :"

پروانه من نیم که بیک شعله جان دهم شمع که شب بسوزم و دم بر نیاورم

2. "Thy collar, my love, has not been dyed with saffron," said Jahāngīr, "engrained therein is the pallor of my face :"

نیست جانان بر گریبان تو رنگ زعفران زردی رنگ رخ من شد گریبان گیر تو

"And it is the ruby-drops of my heart which have lent their hue to those ruby-buttons on thy silken coat," answered Nūr Jahān :

ترا که تکه لعل است بر لباس حریر شد است قطره خون منت گریبان گیر

3. "Why do old men go about with their backs bent?" asked Jahāngīr. "They are seeking for their youth that is gone," replied Nūr Jahān.

چرا خم گشته میگردند پیران جهان دیده؟ (جهانگیر) بزیر خاک میجویند ایام جوانی را (نورجهان)

4. The task of awakening Shāh Jahān from his night's rest was entrusted to a maid-servant of Mumtāz Maḥal who, once misjudging the time, awoke the Emperor long before dawn. Thereupon Shāh Jahān lost his temper, came up to Mumtāz Maḥal and said: "The head must be chopped off"

"The head must be chopped off," replied the Empress, "of that bird who hath sung before her time, for what does this fairy-creature know of dusk or dawn?"

سر بریدن لازم است آن مرغ بی هنگام را این پری پیکر چه داند وقت صبح و شام را

5. The lot of Mughal princesses was particularly unhappy for not being able to find eligible husbands, most of them had to remain unmarried. "O waterfall," says Zību'n-Nisā, "for whose sake dost thou mourn? For whose sake dost thou hang thy head in grief? And what manner of pain was it that like me, through the life-long night, thou didst dash thy head against the rocks and weep?"

ای آبشار نوحه گر از بهر کیستی؟ سر درنگون فگنده ز اندوه چیستی؟
آیا چه درد بود که چون ما تمام شب سر بر زمین میزدی و میگریستی؟

1. Sir Jadunath Sarkar, *Studies in Mughal India*, p. 80; see also Muqtadir, *Persian Catalogue*, Vol. III, pp. 250-251.

6. Seeing Zību'n-Nisā on the palace-roof, dressed in a green sārī, the poet and governor 'Āqil Khān said: "A form dressed in green appears under the blue vault of heaven." "Neither force nor gold nor guile will bring her to thee (by heaven)," replied Zību'n-Nisā.

سبز پوشی بلب بام نظر می آید (عقل خان) نه بزاری نه بزوری نه بزرمی آید (زیب النساء)

And when 'Āqil Khān continued to press his suit,¹ she quoted from Sa'dī: "why should the wise man ('Āqil) commit an act which brings repentance in its train?"

چرا کاری کند عاقل که باز آید پشیمانی؟

7. Two more smart replies are ascribed to Zību'n-Nisā. "Rarely has a piebald pearl (half black, half white) been seen," was a stiff hemistich to complete:

در ابلق کسی کم دیده موجود

"Unless it be the tears of a damsel with collyrium in her eyes," replied Zību'n-Nisā:

مگر اشک بتان سرمه آلود

8. Because of their excessive neatness, people think these verses have been faked. But the fact is that in Mughal India, poetry was in the air; and even the servants in the palace could recite and improvise verses. "The Chinese mirror is broken and gone," said an attendant penitently:

از قضا آئینه چینی شکست

"All's well: an object of vanity and self-seeing is gone," replied Zību'n-Nisā:

خوب شد، اسباب خود بینی² شکست

1. Sir Jadunath Sarkar, *Studies in Mughal India*, pp. 85-86: "From the life-sketch of Āqil Khān we find that he was at the same place with Zeb-un-nissa first at Daulatabad in 1658 (some ten months), then at Lahor in 1663 for a week only, thenceforth with the imperial Court at Delhi and Agra till his resignation in April 1669, again with the Court during the Rajput wars of 1679 and 1680, and finally at Delhi from January 1681 to 1696. It was only during the first and last of these periods that he could have been tempted to court the Princess by the absence of her august father."

2. The best use of خودبینی is by the Persian poet Kamāl of Khujand who says of a darwīsh with a cut nose: "since the poor wretch has no nose— بینی why chide him for not looking beyond his nose?"

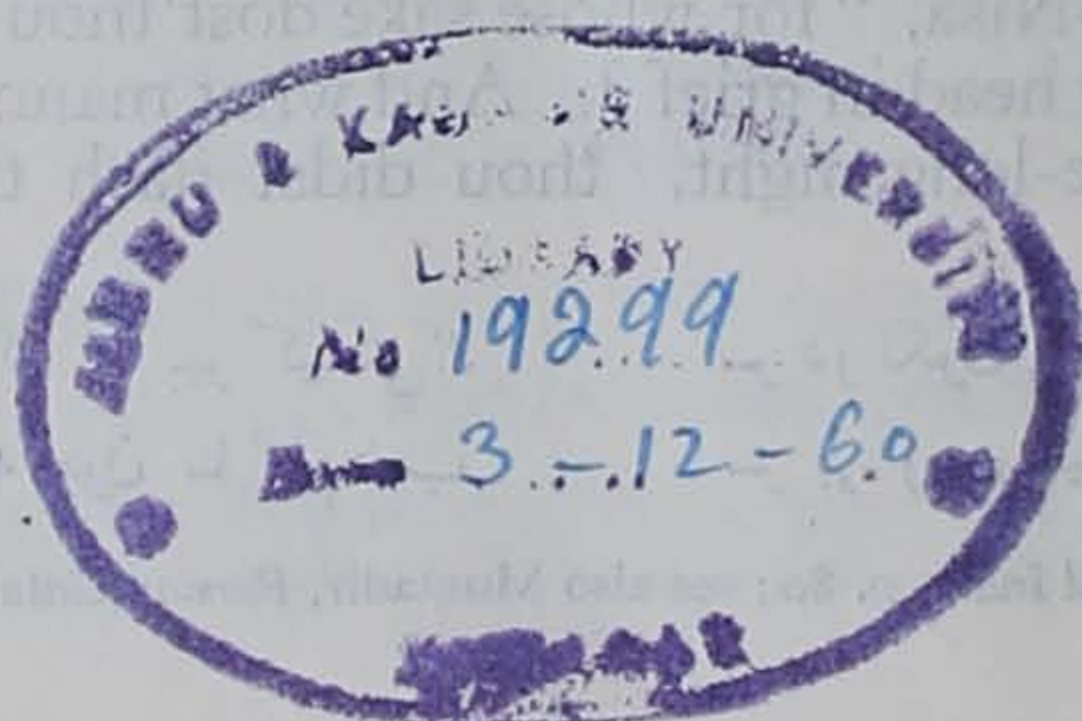
نشاید جرم خودبینی برو بست که آن بیچاره خود، بینی ندارد



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